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Current Developments in the Graduate Professional Curriculum

By Florence R. Day

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In common with all other professions, social work is forced to review the present position of the graduate professional curriculum in the perspective of its development. The time span is relatively short. The first school of social work offering a full-time one year course was established only forty years ago. Training in this early period took the form of a course, or a cluster of courses, offered under a variety of auspices, largely geared to preparing for specific tasks and augmented by practical work without educational controls. Fortunately individual social agencies and national agencies such as the American Association of Social Workers, Family Welfare Association of America, and the National Conference of Social Work gave unwavering support to these early efforts, firm in the conviction that achievement of standards and recognition of social work as a profession depended on providing a basis of adequate scientific training. However, little of uniform standard was achieved until the establishment of the American Association of Schools of Social Work in 1919, which provided a channel of communication for interchange between the member schools. The only provision required for the admission of the original charter schools was that the educational institution maintain a full course of training for social work covering at least one academic year, and including a substantial amount of both class instruction and supervised field work.[1]

Objectives of Professional Education

Education for social work has a twofold responsibility; to develop a professional person and to advance professional knowledge. To achieve the former, the educational base must be a broad one, encompassing a body of concepts, a wide range of knowledge, and competence in performance. Sequence and continuity of learning is essential to integration and growth. It cannot be arrived at through a curriculum composed of an aggregate of courses taught as separate entities in class and field. The professional person must possess the foundation to become increasingly valuable through acquiring an analytic approach and ability to adapt to a wide variety of situations and attributes of self-discipline, judgment, and initiative. To contribute to the advance of professional knowledge, it is incumbent on a faculty to be in the vanguard of social work development. Their task requires not only a constant retesting of the validity of the educational content, but defining new areas for exploration and study. The social worker of tomorrow will reflect the ability of a faculty to analyze the educational problems of today, and to envisage new horizons in knowledge and skill. Viewed in this perspective, a graduate professional curriculum for social work is judged by the total integration of its faculty, students, courses, and agencies.

Criteria for Accrediting Schools

The study of curriculum in member schools was one of the major projects of the Association from its beginning. The reports of the several Curriculum Committees must be seen as an integral part of an overall pattern for a qualified school. The present criteria formulated to define these standards by which a school merits recognition, have become the basis for accrediting and admitting schools to associate membership. In general these requirements include a curriculum which is entirely graduate; a faculty qualified academically and professionally; a program planned and directed toward the fulfillment of requirements leading to a certificate or degree; affiliation as an autonomous unit with a college or univercity accredited for graduate work; and a director qualified to give leadership and to exercise control over standards of admission, choice of faculty, content of curriculum, and recommendation of students for graduation.[2]

Keeping the Curriculum Dynamic

Within this framework the Committee on Accrediting suggests many ways by which the curriculum may be kept dynamic. Their suggestions emphasize the restatement of educational objectives when changes in the times so indicate, and review of purposes to be sure that they are consistent with practice. Of utmost importance

[1] Education for Social Work by Gordon Hamilton, *Social Work Year Book*, 1945.

[2] *Manual of Accrediting, AASSW.* Copies may be obtained from the office of the American Association of Schools of Social Work, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago 37, Ill., price $1.00.

is the organization of the faculty to insure participation in educational policies and to stimulate improvement in instruction. Continuous curriculum review is needed to maintain flexibility, balance, and correlation between class and field. Very essential is it to establish a system of instruction on a graduate seminar level by which students and faculty together study and approach problems. Willingness to explore unknown fields and opportunities for research and first-hand contact with the field strengthen teaching competence.

The Emerging Modern Curriculum

It is natural that the first efforts to define the criteria for the graduate professional curriculum, both in its total pattern and in its separate entities, should move in the direction of standardization. The need to find a common professional base in social work education was the incentive which prompted the forming of the Association. Hence the first Curriculum Committee, appointed in 1930, stated its objective as being "to find some body of knowledge which may be called basic, and which should be given by all schools engaged in training for social work." The work of this committee led to the adoption in 1932 of the so-called "minimum curriculum." This established a requirement of 20 semester or 30 quarter hours to be completed within one graduate year of study. Group A courses, consisting of case work, medical information, and psychiatric information were required of all. Additional courses were grouped according to a supposed common denominator in subject matter, and one or two courses were required in each group in order to assure spread and balance.

From 1932 to 1938 some phase of curriculum study was constantly in process in the Association. But perhaps the major developments were shown by the changes in curriculum content going on in the schools themselves. Emphasis was placed on developing generic content in the teaching of case work. Greater effort was made to develop the courses dealing with the physical and emotional make-up of the individual. Courses in community organization and administration common to both government and voluntary agencies were strengthened. Materials in the public welfare field were expanded and efforts made to relate the curriculum to the social and economic setting of the larger community.

By 1938 it became apparent that the established minimum curriculum had not kept pace with developments in content and new emphases in the field of social work. Of major assistance to the schools in meeting the new situation was the grant from the Rockefeller Foundation which made possible a study of the personnel needs in agencies established or extended under the Social Security Act and a study of the place of the schools in preparation for public social service with these agencies. This study identified certain areas in the professional curriculum for special exploration and development, recommended a review of the minimum curriculum, and urged joint planning by schools and agencies to develop more effective educational programs. The scrutiny of the entire professional curriculum became a major activity.

Adoption of Eight Basic Areas of Curriculum

The next Curriculum Committee began its work in the fall of 1941. Its assignment was to make recommendations for the revision of the minimum curriculum. When the study method and approach had been formulated, the members agreed that their work should be a consideration of fields of knowledge rather than of specific courses. The final recommendation was that eight basic subject matter areas form the generic foundation for all professional practice. These eight constitute the new Association standard of what is basic preparation for the field. They include social welfare administration, social case work, social group work, community organization, social research (statistics and methods of research), medical information, public welfare, and psychiatry (human behavior and psychopathology).

These eight were considered essential not only because each contains subject matter necessary for professional practice, but because each serves as an integrating force within the curriculum as a whole. In the committee's opinion, the preparation of all social workers should be built around a curriculum encompassing the whole of social work, and not just some of its segments. The fundamental note of the whole report was set both at its beginning and close by the committee's declaration of belief in the necessity to adhere to a long range point of view. It conceived its function as being the setting of certain standards which might serve as guide posts in changing times.

The adoption of the new basic curriculum in May 1944 left many topics relevant for immediate and longtime study.[3] The basic content in field work was yet to be defined. In each of the eight basic areas of subject matter, advanced content was still to be formulated. Sequences and specializations, preparation of teaching materials, and development of the curriculum to prepare for administrative positions in social welfare were some of the topics suggested for further study. Therefore, upon recommendation of the retiring Curriculum Committee, the Association established a Curriculum Planning Committee, charged to implement the report and to furnish continued leadership in carrying forward the task of curriculum planning for the Association.

[3] This report (Final Report on the Work and Recommendations of the Curriculum Committee—#560) may be obtained from the Association of Schools office, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago 37, price 15¢.

Standardization versus Dynamic Experimentation

Having achieved a degree of standardization, differentiation in individual schools and in the educational problems present in the profession comes to the fore in considering next steps. It has always been the aim of the Association in setting norms to protect the unique purposes and characteristics of the individual schools. "Recognition is given to the fact that the totality of possible objectives includes many variations and that consequently a given school may devote itself only to a limited part." [4] Likewise, it is the purpose of the Association to view social work education as a dynamic process. New conditions of life, advances in scientific knowledge, the increasing complexity of social organization, must be reflected in social work education as they permeate the profession itself. Therefore it is questionable how far conformation to a pattern should be permitted at this time. Experimentation, flexibility, freedom to try out various approaches is the medium for evolving a profession.

These beliefs on the part of the Association led the newly formed Planning Committee to search for an approach to further study which might avoid too early crystallization of additional standardized content. In an educational venture in which a consciously planned focus is just beginning to emerge, time is needed to test the validity of the newly acquired standards and leeway is needed to experiment in a number of directions. The widening scope of social work has caused considerable ferment as to whether the present offerings in the curriculum are sufficiently broad to prepare for the expanding field of social welfare activities. Positions which require competence in overall community planning and in the formulation of social welfare policies and programs are developing in a variety of fields. Augmenting the present two-year graduate curriculum to include the range of knowledge and skill needed to prepare for social work in all its variations looms as an impossible feat. Having moved from a narrow and technical base of training to a broader professional one, a new danger arises lest the curriculum become so varied and comprehensive as to destroy the claim to professional competence in any given direction.

With this in mind, the major educational problem presented appeared to be the formulating of educational requirements appropriate to the major interest and future objective of the student seen in relation to the diverse demands in the field. In the committee's judgment, two types of social work student appear to be identifiable: those whose major interest is in social welfare planning, and those whose major interest is in social work practice. It was agreed that it might be the legitimate function of a school for social work to prepare for either objective, but that the educational program should be planned and geared to the attainment of the given purpose.

The "Generalist" and the "Specialist"

For purposes of identification, the committee came to refer to these two types of students as "the social work generalist" and "the social work specialist." The social work generalist would look toward positions of administration and community organization in the larger field of social welfare, and his preparation would stress additional competence along these lines, with some measure of specialization in fields of further interest, such as employment service, public assistance, public housing, social insurances, and social research. The social work specialist would be the clinical major who would become the practitioner, supervisor, and executive in agencies giving direct service to their clientele. In each instance preparation would include the fundamental knowledge and skill basic to the social worker (that is, knowledge in the eight basic areas of subject matter stated above), and a minimum of competence in the practice of the basic skill of either case work or group work. It is essential that a broad professional base be maintained for the specialist and it is equally essential that the generalist acquire a sound technical base.

Two committees have just been appointed to undertake the rather imposing task of attempting to formulate an entire educational program appropriate to fulfill each of these objectives. Some of the major educational problems which each committee will have to consider are preprofessional preparation at the undergraduate level, and its relation to the graduate curriculum; generic content and specialized content in the two-year graduate program, maintaining the proper balance between the technical and the broader subject matter of social work; the nature and problems of field work, with a willingness to explore new field work opportunities when examination proves a genuine educational experience is available. Requirements regarding research, development of teaching materials, methods for acquiring and assimilating content, and practice derived from new developments in the field are areas still to be developed. Recognizing the dilemma which arises from the rapid expansion of subject matter in the field, and the limits imposed by two years of graduate study, the committees were also empowered to consider content for a third year, or requirements leading toward a doctorate in social work. These projected plans for committee study have not as yet been discussed by the schools. The newly appointed committees have yet to hold their first meeting, and are quite free to modify, or propose alternate suggestions.

[4] Manual of Accrediting, *op. cit.*

Curriculum—Whose Responsibility?

The committee realized that an undertaking such as this would not yield ready answers to some of the immediate problems which face the schools and the field. However, just as it is true that social work education can only communicate advances achieved in the field, likewise the Association can only embody in an overall curriculum study content and methods developed in its individual member schools. The Association visualizes curriculum study as a major responsibility of the individual schools, and assumes that the thinking and gains derived therefrom will be channeled into the work of Association committees. Faculties have a unique opportunity to participate in social work developments without being overidentified with a particular agency or field of endeavor. Their attention must be directed to the immediate educational problems at hand, but they are also committed to a long range point of view. The impact of change in our economic forces, advances in the social sciences, the permeation of interracial culture and understanding will influence the future direction of social work education.

Field Work: An Adventure

By Sarah Ivins

Director of Field Work, New York School of Social Work

IN the constantly changing field of social work, education is an adventure. There have always been the elements of risking, daring, seeking achievement in new fields. One new field in social work may be reached by climbing the fence that separates student from worker; psychologically that fence is often high, the stones loose and slippery. Once over and relaxed in the newness of the other side, one can enjoy the daring and risking in change of status.

This article is written for workers who may be considering this educational adventure and who may wish to explore the potentialities for growth through field work. It is also written for persons who have experienced this adventure in a professional school and would like to know more about the experience as it is now offered in social work education. In the interest of brevity, this paper is restricted to the field work program of the New York School of Social Work.[1]

Simultaneous Learning in Class and Field

First of all we believe that students learn more rapidly, realistically and with a better chance for professional integration of their learning if they study in the class room and practice in the field concurrently and at the same time undertake a small piece of "research." Field work assignments are planned to meet the students' interests, to fit into agency programs and use of supervisory strength, as well as to fulfill the educational requirements of the school.

We differentiate field work from a job experience. In either there is supervision by a social worker who is responsible to the agency for its program and for the welfare of its clients. However, as a student whatever one does is based on a plan shaped so as to enable one to learn in a purposeful progressive way. Whereas as a worker what one does depends on what the agency needs to have done to further its program.

Of the 217 supervisors currently used by the New York School, all but four are members of agency staffs with time released from agency responsibility to plan for and work with students, to consult with school faculty individually and in supervisory groups and to cooperate in any other way that furthers the joint interests.

The Manual for Field Work

In order to plan and work together, the field work faculty and case work supervisors of the school have prepared a manual and a set of criteria for student progress. The basic principles and procedures of these materials are pedagogical and psychological in content and therefore we believe useful for any teacher of social work practice. Faculty and supervisors of group work are working on an adaptation of this material focussed to their area. For the field of community organization which involves so many variations in program and focus we have not yet attempted a similar monograph.

The manual is introduced to supervisors through a definition of the educational responsibility which they share with school faculty: a responsibility to teach students to use the theories and techniques of social work within the structure and function of an agency. This manual gives

[1] Although there is a good deal of variation in the field work plans developed by the professional schools, the plan followed by the New York School of Social Work is representative of a large number. Later issues of The Compass will present additional discussion of this subject.

direction and concrete suggestions of ways in which students may be helped to learn within an agency setting. In the appendix there is a field work report outline for the use of all case work supervisors in reporting student progress at the end of each quarter. This outline has also been adapted to serve a similar purpose in the other areas in which we assign students for training. Criteria for measuring progress have been formulated and we plan to add them to the manual.

Much of the thinking and planning which we do together is related to the sort of daily job that social workers are familiar with. The criteria mentioned above will doubtless have a familiar ring, as workers on any agency staff are consciously and unconsciously developing skill and using new knowledge.

The Field Work Supervisor's Responsibility for the Worker

It is useful for prospective students to consider whether they have enjoyed learning thus far both by working independently and through such supervision as has been available because the relation to supervisor in a field work assignment in a school of social work continues this process. The manual based on years of experience in developing field work in many agencies is designed to help the supervisor understand the worker who has become the student in training.

The significance of training in field work is just this: The supervisor carries over the school's teaching process directly into the field of practice and in accordance with an individualized plan worked out according to the needs of each student. In order to do this the supervisor must have the student's help so that her teaching and the student's learning may be knit together.

Content of Field Work

The headings of the four sections of the field work report outline suggest the configuration within which the supervisor, the student and the field work faculty think and work.

1. Professional Development.
2. Orientation to and capacity to work within an Agency's structure and function.
3. Procedures and Skills.
4. Supervision: The Student's use of it.

Within this configuration the content of student program will vary in direct relation to individual capacities for professional development both intellectual and emotional. There will be variations also in direct relation to the supervisor's skill in using a total agency program in the student's behalf. One can see her leadership in her choice of material and in her way of relating the student's use of it to the aforementioned objectives. Her imagination, sensitivity and professional competence in using her social work knowledge and techniques give freedom as well as guidance for the development of a student's professional self. A supervisor with teaching ability and with discernment will look forward as the student himself moves forward and will provide him with assignments which meet his changing needs. As he consciously reaches towards his professional goals he will take increasing responsibility for his own learning, and as a worker carrying responsibilities in a job, working with growing independence and hopefully with the success which in itself spells encouragement. He will feel free to raise questions about himself as a growing social worker. If he has always adventured on a job, further adventuring in education will provide him with opportunities to answer his earlier questions. In field work we hope to aid every student in clarifying his questions, his expectations, his fears, and his achievements.

Use of Criteria in Evaluation of Student Achievement

There is an increasing demand upon school faculty and supervisors alike to understand and to use the criteria to help students to think, to learn, to perform, to give freely of themselves to the task at hand. The following excerpts from the field work report outline and illustrate the process to some extent:

> We recognize variations in the initial maturity students bring to field work and variations in growth rates. There are aspects of the work which may weigh unevenly at any time. In evaluating student progress, the parts of the job to be done must be viewed in their relationship to total performance.

Students come to school with experience that varies in quality and quantity. However, we at the New York School do not attempt to evaluate these differences at the outset; we grant advanced field work credit for continuous paid social work of a year or more, believing that students will demonstrate through performance in the field whatever they have learned previously as workers.[2] They clarify for themselves and for us the use they can make of our curriculum, the appropriate sequence of assignments and the numbers of quarters in each. As they and we understand their tempo and ways of learning, our planning together becomes more accurate.

Objectives of the Learning Process

Planning his field work curriculum becomes relatively easy when supervisor and student share the following learning objects: Increased understanding of himself, skillful relationships and help to clients, a developing awareness and understanding of his co-workers, a growing ability to organ-

[2] This practice of granting advanced field work credit is not followed in all of the professional schools.

ize and keep his work up to date and increasing tolerance for other agencies and workers.

The following criteria will illustrate the continuity in learning quarter by quarter.

"By the end of the first quarter, the student has realized that he must take responsibility for his own learning. He may not be able to do this well, but he knows it through recognizing the difference between this and other educational experiences in which one's own acceptance of responsibilities is not so clearly demonstrated. This assumption of responsibility will be reflected in his lessened desire for the supervisor to give him an outline and the answers, in his increased freedom to plan for supervisory conferences and to show through a sharing of ideas and questions that he has the conviction that unless he shares, he cannot learn. He will be able to accept the validity of processed recording, as a base for the supervisor's teaching and his learning and will do such recording promptly as a basis for supervisor's preparation for conferences. At the end of the quarter, the student should have some definite awareness of what some of the major points are which he and the supervisor will need to focus on together, and be clear as to some of the ways in which they can proceed in working on them. Without this, we have convictions that neither he nor the supervisor is ready to move into 2nd quarter work.

"Criteria for progress in the 2nd quarter should be though of in relation to the special significance this period has in relation to total objectives and criteria for the 1st quarter. For the student, this period should bring clarification through emotional integration of his former intellectual grasp of what is involved for him as an individual in becoming a professional person. Clarification comes from the fact that he should be perceiving more complexities, seeing many more factors both internal and external in the social situations he is dealing with, grasping a fuller understanding of his own and other agencies functions, realizing and accepting the necessity of working through the factors in his own attitudes and feelings as they operate in the learning situations. At times he may be able to come back to the supervisor and to say 'I didn't know what I should do, but this is what I thought was happening.' He should be able to discuss the point he has reached in his learning, to accredit his strength and to have some pretty well defined conviction as to how he can use these to increase his skill and sureness. He should be able to sense achievement in many of his cases and to be more comfortable about the pace at which this kind of learning moves.

"By the end of the 3rd quarter, the student's work should reflect professional awareness and some sureness in the way he reacts to the more usual range of social problems and personalities which he is experiencing in his social work role. In the 3rd quarter, his work should show a smoother surer quality and more self-confidence. This grows out of the fact that he will be attaining, by the end of this quarter, the kind of understanding and professional control of self outlined previously but also because his awareness and growing knowledge of social forces, community resources, and techniques in interviewing have become consolidated through understanding and use. In this quarter, he will be more conscious of differential diagnosis and demonstrate some real sureness in using this in the majority of his cases. This will show in the part he can take in selecting different levels of treatment for individual cases. In his interviewing, we should be able to note a quick sure use of basic techniques. In his use of supervision, the student should have attained an ability to share fully. His awareness of where he is and what he needs should have developed to the point where he can take a substantial part with the supervisor in planning what cases and areas they will select for emphasis, constantly reaching out for new experience. He should be comfortable about discussing his mistakes. From his supervisor's criticism and his own autocriticism, he should have developed an awareness of his future goals in training that is realistic and sound educationally."

To be "realistic and sound" is also the responsibility of those of us who have adopted these criteria. We can achieve this useful state only through working together with the same awareness and freedom in sharing and thinking that we expect of students and supervisors. We are obligated to do so if we are to provide leadership in teaching students to use social work theory in practice. If we are to teach students we must know them and have their help—know them through knowledge of their performance, through discussing their work with them, and through a continuity of experience with them and their supervisors.

Directory Postponed

The November issue of THE COMPASS carried a notice of a proposal to publish a name and address directory of the Association membership during 1946. It has now been decided to postpone issuing a directory. The National Board felt that a name and address directory would have limited value and printing costs would be high under present conditions and that the Association really needs to have data available for periodic publication of a directory which would give important information about the educational background and experience of its members. Provision for keeping this type of information about the membership up to date would require the installation of new record keeping devices in the national office at a cost which the current budget could not absorb.

Training for Community Organization and Social Welfare Administration

By Arthur Dunham

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What Kind of Training?

WHAT kind of training for community organization and social welfare administration should be given by graduate schools of social work? And to whom should such training be given?

From the standpoint of training, community organization and administration have certain similarities which make it possible to attempt to discuss them in a single article. For example: (1) Neither has been defined in terms which would be immediately recognized as generally accepted by most social workers. (2) Neither community organization nor administration usually involves direct first-hand service to "consumers," or "clients" as we usually call them. (3) The two have certain overlapping areas of content—for example, functions and relationships of boards, agency program development, and public relations. (4) The two have also certain common methods—for instance, fact-finding, planning, conference, education. (5) Usually a new practitioner in social work does not start out on a job which is concerned exclusively or primarily with community organization or administration. Ordinarily the new social worker begins with a client-service job. (6) All social agencies make some use of both administration and community organization.

For all these similarities, community organization and administrtaion are not the same thing, nor (in my judgment) is one of them a subdivision of the other. It seems desirable to define the two terms as I see them; then those who define them differently may judge how far the difference in the starting point may make for variation in conclusions on the subject of training.

> By *community organization* I mean the art or process of bringing about or maintaining adjustment between social welfare needs and social welfare resources, in a geographical area or a functional field.[1]

> Under the term administration I would include all the supporting or facilitating activities of social agencies which are not direct service but which are necessary or incidental to the giving of direct service by the agency. This would include a wide range of activities, from policy determination and executive leadership at one extreme to dictating correspondence, keeping a petty cash account, and filing case records at the other extreme. According to this conception, administration is not confined to the function of the executive; on the contrary, *every worker of a social agency carries on administrative activities and participates in administration.*[2]

The Basic Curriculum

In January 1944 the American Association of Schools of Social Work adopted a recommendation of their Curriculum Committee that content in eight "areas of subject matter be considered basic in the practice of social work in any area." The areas are: public welfare; social case work; social group work; *community organization;* medical information; social research (statistics, research methods); psychiatry (human behavior, psychopathology); and *social welfare administration.* (The italics are, obviously, mine.)

I agree entirely that the foregoing subjects should all be offered by every two-year graduate school of social work. I disagree with the idea that every student who is a candidate for the professional degree should be required to take *all* of these subjects. I believe that medical information and psychopathology should be taken by all students who are interested primarily in case work; I would certainly not include them as required courses for all students interested primarily in community organization. These courses would be useful to any student, certainly; but the student cannot take everything in the curriculum and it is doubtful that these courses would be as useful to the student specializing in community organization as additional courses in community organization, research, administration, or public welfare, or courses such as interpretation and public relations, history of social work, child welfare problems, community health problems, or housing.

The other areas of subject matter (including, by all means, human behavior) I think should be required for all students; although in practice I should expect that we would make only gradual progress in establishing administration as a required course.

[1] Social Work Year Book, 1943, p. 138.

[2] Social Work Year Book, 1941, p. 19.

The Basic Course in Community Organization

The introductory course in community organization is at present, in many schools, a required course for all students. Thinking and practice differ as to whether it should be one of the early introductory courses or whether it should be an "advanced" course, taken only after courses in case work and group work. I myself see it as an introductory course: community organization is a pervasive process in social work, and I think the student needs the course early in his training to help him acquire "a community point of view" and an understanding of the nature of community organization problems and methods of attacking them.

One thing most schools are now agreed on: this introductory course should focus on the subject of community organization as one of the basic processes of social work: it should not be, what it often was in the past, a mere descriptive course about the "field of social work" or "community resources." On the other hand it seems to me that the introductory course should be thought of mainly as giving the student a point of view, and understanding of a process, the "feel" of community organization; the course is not a "tool" course in the sense of equipping the student for the specialized practice of community organization. One doesn't become a skilled practitioner of community organization—any more than he becomes a practitioner of case work or group work—by virtue of twelve or sixteen classroom sessions.

Specializing in Community Organization

This brings us to the student who wishes to specialize in community organization. Here I should state a strong personal conviction, which I think is held by a number of leaders in community organization, that *a graduate of a school should ordinarily not take a job primarily concerned with community organization unless or until he has had one or two years of work experience in a case work, group work, or other client service agency,* or possibly some other more or less equivalent type of experience in working with people. Social work is concerned with serving people; and I believe the social worker should make his entrance into his profession at the point of helping and working with people directly rather than at a point where his job content may be concerned largely with committees, meetings, organization, plans, programs or campaigns.

The student in the school of social work who wishes to specialize in community organization should have the same basic courses as any other student in the school. Beyond this, specialization may be provided through special courses, field work in community organization, and a thesis or research project related to the area of specialization.

If a school accepts the idea that work with clients ought to precede the practice of community organization, it becomes necessary to distinguish between two types of students who may wish to specialize in community organization. Some students have had several years of practical experience in case work or group work—sometimes experience in executive positions also. It would seem that such students might proceed, at the proper time in their school training, to specialize and to take their field work in community organization, without being required to take field work in case work or group work.

But what about the student fresh from college, with no social work experience, who thinks that *he* would like to specialize in community organization? Such a student must be adequately equipped to practice case work or group work—that is, he must have field work and special courses in case work or group work—if he is to practice and gain experience in one of those areas, immediately after graduation, and before entering on the practice of community organization. On the other hand, if the student is ever to have field work and advanced courses in community organization, he is much more likely to take them (especially the field work) during his regular time of training at the school. I see no entirely satisfactory answer to this problem. Probably the best that can be said is that the student should take field work and enough advanced courses in case work or group work to fit him to practice in one of these areas;[3] but he should also take some field work and advanced courses in community organization. This may mean that he will take the maximum rather than the minimum number of credits permitted by the school for field work. It may mean also that he will need to return to his own or some other school and to take certain additional courses later, when he begins the actual practice on a community organization job.

As to advanced courses in community organization, it would seem that there might be one rather general technical course, centering on the problems, methods, practice, and principles of community organization. The student would need in addition courses in administration of social agencies and the interpretation of social work. There is a wide range of possibilities for other courses, as the needs may appear and as the facilities of the schools may be available to develop such courses. Perhaps some such courses should be given as summer "institutes," primarily for experienced practitioners; indeed, a well-equipped school might well experiment with offering a constellation of such specialized and related courses on community organization during a summer session.

[3] Such a student, preparing to practice case work before community organization, would undoubtedly need courses in medical information and psychopathology referred to earlier in this discussion.

Some of the topics which might lend themselves to treatment in special courses are: problems of welfare councils; the development of social welfare programs; problems of joint financing; the financing of individual agencies; social action and legislative promotion; statewide health and welfare planning; national health and welfare planning; the development of programs in specific fields—health, recreation, housing, race relations, etc.

The purpose of field work in community organization is to help the student to learn to use the community organization process skillfully and effectively. It would seem that the field work should give opportunity for the student to deal with typical community organization problems and situations, to work on and with committees, and to gain experience in the use of such basic methods as analysis, planning, organization, conference, and education. I believe fact-finding should not be the major focus of the field work assignment: this is one rather highly specialized aspect of community organization, and the student will gain a first hand acquaintance with it if he prepares a thesis or research project. A great variety of agencies besides welfare councils and community chests may present opportunities for community organization field placements. One school lists 19 different field work training centers in community organization.[4]

Training in Administration

Much that has been said about training for community organization can be applied or adapted to administration. I have come to believe that all students need a course in administration: if they practice social work, they will all work in organizations and will have to deal throughout their professional lives, with administrative realities. I would regard the basic course as a "tool course," but I think it should not be too advanced, and should be taught primarily from the point of view of the staff member rather than of the executive. Presumably it should include such matters as agency organization; functions and relationships of the board, executive, and staff; personnel policies, employment procedure, and personnel administration; job specifications, job classification and time studies; administrative procedure; fiscal and office administration.

If the basic course is of the sort here suggested, there will probably be a place for an advanced course on the executive and his job; and larger schools may develop specialized courses in personnel administration, accounting, budgeting and financial administration, and so on. A course in interpretation and an advanced course in community organization will also usually be needed by the student specializing in administration.

[4] Bulletin of the New York School of Social Work, April 1945, p. 37. (General Announcement, 1945–1946.)

The graduate of a school of social work, without previous experience, should not and usually could not step into a position which was primarily administrative. With rare exceptions, field work in administration should be taken only by students who have had actual substantial work experience. One of the best types of administrative field work is an assignment as a staff assistant—administrative assistant or "assistant to"—an executive who is himself a good administrator and who has both the time and ability to teach something of what he knows.

Teaching Materials

Satisfactory teaching materials are gradually increasing in number, though they are still much more adequate in administration than in community organization. A major addition to the literature of community organization is contained in the recently published textbook and collection of documents on *Community Organization for Social Welfare,* by Wayne McMillen. (University of Chicago, 1945.)

The community organization or administrative "case record" is, in my judgment, one of the most valuable teaching devices, but there are as yet few really good ones that are available—almost none in administration. After a number of years of experimentation, I have come to place increasing emphasis on the use of "case problems," particularly in the teaching of administration. The typical case problem is a brief statement of a problem or problem situation. It can be distributed to the students in mimeographed form (or eventually we might even have a book of case problems!), in advance of the class session, as a basis for class discussion or perhaps for written reports. Some of the interesting possibilities of such case problems are suggested by some typical titles: A request to make a survey; a conflict situation in a state conference; a problem in retrenchment; an interview for a position; a complaint about a worker; reorganizing a county welfare department; a problem in morale. Other administrative teaching materials are occasionally found in improbable places in literature: for example, the 18th chapter of the Book of Exodus and a chapter on "Converting the Slums," in Galsworthy's *Swan Song!*

Training in community organization and administration has come a long way in the last twenty years, but it is still in an age of exploration, adventure, and pioneering. The element of adventure ought not to be lost, but we may hope that in the next five or ten years we may become increasingly better equipped, more adequately outfitted and more skillfully guided for the journey.

Consultation on Preprofessional Social Work Education

By Mary Sydney Branch

Consultant on Preprofessional Social Work Education
American Association of Schools of Social Work

WITHIN the last few years many letters have come to the office of the American Association of Schools of Social Work from college instructors and administrators asking for the advice of the Association on the undergraduate curriculum for students who look forward to careers in social work. A typical letter reads:

> Many of our students express an interest in social work. Some of them hope to go on to graduate schools of social work, others will go immediately into social work positions without taking professional training. Are we offering the kind of curriculum which will best prepare both groups of students? In what department should a student, interested in social work, major? What courses which we now offer should we suggest as most useful to future social workers? Should we add courses in social work? If so, could you help us with the content of these courses? It seems to us important not to duplicate material offered in the graduate schools of social work. Would you consider it possible for undergraduate social work courses to be taught by faculty members who have had no social work training?
>
> There are no professional social work training facilities in our state and a very serious shortage of trained social workers in the social agencies of the state. We have been considering the establishment of a school of social work on our campus to provide for our state. Can you help us with our plans?

Letters such as the above have come to the AASSW office in increasing numbers. They indicate to the executive secretary and to the Board of AASSW the widespread interest in social work education at the undergraduate level and the need for consultative service to colleges. Early in 1945 a grant of money from the Field Foundation made possible the services of a professional staff member to give consultative service to colleges for a period of six months. The grant has recently been extended for another six months' period. Announcement of this appointment in the professional journals has greatly increased the number of requests for help and the expression of interest by college faculties.

Of necessity, consultative service to many of the colleges has been given through correspondence and by discussion with faculty members who have stopped in at the Association office. In other cases, however, it has been possible to make visits to the colleges and there meet with representatives of the college faculties and with interested members of the student body. A day spent on a college campus is useful in acquainting AASSW with the problems of particular colleges and the viewpoints of its faculty and in discussing with a representative faculty group the tremendous needs of the social work field and the most appropriate role for the undergraduate college to play in educating social workers.

Special Interests of AASSW Member Schools

Faculty members in the member schools of the AASSW have been concerned about a number of serious problems in education for social work:

1. The inability of the schools to meet the demand for trained social workers.
2. The large number of students who go directly from college into social work positions without professional training. These students are often faced with complex and difficult situations in the lives of their clients and find themselves ill-equipped to deal with them.
3. The number of students who might like social work and be well suited to it, who are directed into business careers or other professions because of the lack of knowledge and understanding of social work on the part of college counselors and instructors.
4. The number of students who apparently make up their minds to enter social work just a few days before they are graduated from college and whose college programs, consequently, have not been planned to give them the background most helpful for social work. Such students are either turned down by the graduate schools, even though they seem emotionally and intel-

lectually qualified for social work; or are admitted with the understanding that they make up their deficiencies, which prolongs the period of training, dissatisfying the student and forcing the graduate schools to offer work which is appropriately undergraduate; or are admitted and allowed to take professional training without the necessary background, which means that the technical work has a weak scientific background.

Consultative service now provided by AASSW may serve to help meet some of these important problems.

Current Programs in Colleges Visited

During the five months of field service to the colleges completed on November 15, visits had been made to colleges in eleven states in the middle-west, the southwest, the east, and New England. On each campus the interest in social work education among students and faculty was marked. However, these colleges have a great variety of programs developed to educate students interested in social work. Some have no plan for suggesting to students that certain areas within the curriculum might be more useful than others to social workers. Some merely suggest to all students interested in social work that they major in sociology. This may mean that the student takes all the courses offered by the sociology department with little or nothing in related fields. Some have developed an excellent sequence of courses drawn from all the social sciences. As part of this sequence, many offer a course in the field of social work, usually within the sociology department and well designed to orient the student to the field and acquaint him with the various groups of people in need of help, the organization of the social services to meet the needs, and a description of the processes of case work, group work, and community organization. Colleges which believe strongly in a liberal arts education without specific vocational preparation are not interested in offering anything beyond the course in the field of social work. Others have an expanded undergraduate program, with elementary courses in public welfare, case work, group work and community organization. Such colleges are likely to offer some agency observation and participation given either as a separate course or in connection with the case work or group work course. In some of the colleges with this expanded social work program little attention has been given to differentiating content between the undergraduate and graduate courses. The elementary case work, group work, and community organization courses are either duplication of the professional courses or are graduate courses diluted for undergraduate consumption. On the other hand, in some colleges these elementary courses have been carefully and skillfully differentiated from the graduate courses in purpose, philosophy, content and method.

An examination of these courses in some colleges has shown that the graduate schools have been right in fearing certain dangers in offering such courses at the undergraduate level. They have feared that the courses may be taught by persons with little knowledge of social work; that the election of all of these courses by a student may deprive him of more important social science content which he needs; or that their election will give him a one-sided program over-balanced with social science and social work courses at the expense of the natural sciences and the humanities.

Purposes of Consultation

One purpose of consultation with the colleges has been to encourage the social scientists to develop preprofessional social work sequences, drawn from all of the social sciences and related fields. The importance of maintaining a balance among the social sciences rather than concentrating too heavily in any one has been emphasized. Students may appropriately major in any one of these subjects, but the major should be well supplemented with courses from the others. The significance of a flexible preprofessional social work curriculum has been emphasized. A rigidly prescribed preprofessional social work curriculum fails to take account of the varying interests of students and of the many types of social work. The importance of a well-rounded liberal arts education with the social sciences in proper relation to the humanities and natural sciences is essential.

A second purpose of consultation with the colleges has been to secure the cooperation of all of the social scientists in developing the preprofessional sequence and in interesting students in social work. The contributions of economics, political science, and history as well as sociology and psychology have been discussed. Instructors have indicated the courses offered in their departments which in their opinion would be most important to social workers. In general, the sociologists have been the group best acquainted with social work and most likely to direct their students to it. Many economists, political scientists and psychologists have complained that their subjects have not been recognized sufficiently in the colleges as contributing important knowledge to the equipment of social workers, but at the same time they have often expressed their need to know more about the social work field, especially the opportunities in it and the necessary preparation for it.

A third purpose of consultation with the colleges has been to give AASSW a first hand knowledge of the developments in the field of preprofessional social work education. The strengths and weaknesses of the education offered

to future social workers in specific colleges, the problems faced by the colleges, the misconceptions of the professional program, and the criticisms of the graduate schools have all been noted.

The Contribution of the Undergraduate College

The widespread interest among college faculty members in helping to meet the needs of the social agencies for personnel is encouraging. Unfortunately some of it has resulted in unsound educational developments. A college which might have made a splendid contribution to social work education by offering strong social sciences may dissipate its efforts by offering an expanded undergraduate social work program or by offering a few graduate professional courses, or by attempting to set up a school of social work. The multiplication of mediocre schools of social work is not desirable. The strengthening of existing schools and the creation of only such new ones as are equipped to offer a professional program of high quality are certainly preferable. The homespun, in-grown professional school which fails to draw faculty or students from outside the locality is to be avoided. Strong schools serving a whole area rather than a locality or even a single state are better than a large number of weak, competitive schools in a single area. Unfortunately, there has not always been a thorough exploration of the advisability of establishing professional training facilities in a given college. Sometimes the practicing social workers bring pressure on the college to do something to prepare workers. Sometimes social workers, not too well qualified professionally and academically, see themselves as faculty members teaching the social work courses in these colleges. Other social workers, of course, have suggested the training program to a particular college in a sincere attempt to meet an acute personnel shortage in their agency. Some sociologists have urged the creation of professional training in connection with their departments because of its value in attracting students. Others, deeply concerned about the needs of the field, have thought of it as the only way of helping to meet the needs. The colleges in the rural areas particularly have been motivated by the desire to "serve the state." Faced with low social work personnel standards and low salaries within the local agencies, they have watched their students go to graduate schools of social work in other areas, never to return to their own states, or to return uninterested in the rural area and ill-equipped to understand and cope with its problems.

Suggestions from the Undergraduate Colleges

As the professional schools have criticized the undergraduate colleges for offering social work courses taught by people without professional competence, so the undergraduate colleges have criticized the graduate schools for some of their poor teaching. They point to the instructor of the graduate course who is a good practitioner but a poor teacher and without knowledge in the social sciences which the graduate schools say is the scientific background of social work training. In general, the social science teaching in the good undergraduate colleges is better than some of the teaching in the graduate schools of social work. This, of course, is true not only of graduate schools of social work but of graduate schools in general. Just as nearly all graduate schools have put emphasis upon ability in research rather than teaching, so the schools of social work have put emphasis upon research ability and professional competency rather than teaching ability.

Another criticism made by the undergraduate colleges of the graduate schools is that students with excellent social science backgrounds report that their first semester or quarter in the graduate school of social work is dull and demands little of them intellectually and that much of the material taught merely repeats material better presented to them in college. Their criticism is undoubtedly valid in some instances and points to the need of better integration of the undergraduate and graduate curricula, as well as to the necessity of seeing that all undergraduates obtain while in college the background best suited for social work training and practice. This would eliminate the necessity for repeating at the graduate level material which is appropriately undergraduate.

The fall months were timely ones in which to discuss the undergraduate curriculum with college faculty members. Almost every college in the country, inspired by the University of Chicago reorganization, the Harvard report, et cetera, and by the problems of post-war education, is busy revising its curriculum. Curriculum committees are meeting endlessly, faculty meetings to discuss the committee reports are frequent, and faculty members have all been thinking and discussing curriculum changes. Thus they have many ideas and are receptive to suggestions. Both the undergraduate and the graduate colleges have a great deal to learn, but through their cooperation and mutual understanding much can be accomplished.

A Correction

We regret that we did not catch a printer's error in Dr. Mendell's article "A Prescription for Health Security" in the November 1945 COMPASS. At the end of her article Dr. Mendell quotes a statement "If we can spend two million dollars . . ." The amount should have been two *billion*. We trust our readers connected the "instrument of destruction" with the well known cost of the Atomic bomb and realized the error.

A Case History of the Nashville School of Social Work

By Lora Lee Pederson

Director, Nashville School of Social Work

SOCIAL work is one of the nation's fastest growing professions. A result is that many groups and several institutions are now making inquiries about how to establish schools for the proper training of social workers. The establishment of the Nashville School of Social Work is so relatively recent that it is possible to present a step-by-step statement of its development in order that its experience may be shared with others. Although the school was not formally opened until May, 1942, it had been evolved through much study and careful planning. From the beginning the three sponsoring institutions—Vanderbilt University, Scarritt and Peabody Colleges—had stressed that only a school of top quality could interest them, and for this reason unusual effort was made to develop the school along sound lines. For the same reason those promoting the school sought quite early the counsel of local and regional social workers and the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

In this paper we shall summarize events leading to the establishment and operation of the Nashville School of Social Work. The following are among the questions that will be answered:

> How was it determined that a school should and could be established in Nashville? How were various groups and sentiments used in favor of the development of the school? How does the professional school contribute to the development of social work programs and the development of a good public attitude toward professional social work?

Early Activities—1925–1939

The founding of the Nashville School of Social Work spans a period of years. In 1925, Mr. Francis H. McLean, then a staff member of the Family Welfare Association of America, came to Nashville and as a result of his visit printed a report called, "A Fact Finding Survey, A Study of Social Work in Nashville, Tennessee," which indicated the need for a school of social work.

In 1926, Dr. Walter W. Pettit, of the New York School of Social Work, came to Nashville at the request of the Laura Spellman Foundation to study the need for professional training of social workers. Funds were not granted Vanderbilt University and Peabody College at this time because the two institutions were not yet ready to agree on policy. In 1924, Scarritt College, which had been located in Kansas City, Missouri, was moved to Nashville in order that students and faculty might benefit by association with Vanderbilt University and Peabody College. Very shortly thereafter the three schools began to study means of cooperation. As early as 1914 Vanderbilt University and Peabody College established the practice of permitting the students to register on one campus and elect courses on the other campus. In time, Scarritt College participated in this same plan. At this point it should be indicated that the campuses of the three schools adjoin, as a result of which the Nashville University Center appears to be one large campus. Ten minutes between classes provides time for a student or a faculty member who teaches on more than one campus to go from one campus to the other. The time element and geographical location of the three schools have been a real asset to cooperative undertaking.

During the school year 1934–35, Vanderbilt University provided training for social workers in its Training School, and students attending the school received federal funds. This school provided preparation for the large number of workers needed in the emergency program, and was not continued after federal funds were exhausted. The late Dr. E. T. Krueger, then head of the Department of Sociology at Vanderbilt University, directed this program. Through his influence during the years many of his students entered the profession of social work.

In 1935 Scarritt College added to its curriculum a program for the training of social-religious workers which included courses in social case work, and community organization. Later, courses in social group work were added. For a number of years, Scarritt offered courses in social work to public health nurses studying at Vanderbilt University and Peabody College and to seniors in the two schools who were sociology, psychology, and education majors, and to students in the Vanderbilt School of Religion. Such an undertaking as the initiation of a school of social work does not come into being without certain personalities at work on the planning and initiation of such a program. It is generally conceded that the present school of social work is an outgrowth of the program at Scarritt College, and that Dr. J. L. Cuninggim, former president of Scarritt College, was the moving figure in the development of the graduate school.

Chancellor O. C. Carmichael of Vanderbilt University has shown great powers of leadership, vision and courage as he advanced certain programs within the University Center. His ability to foresee the future needs of certain groups, to plan carefully yet cautiously the program to answer these needs, and to work skillfully with groups involved has indeed set a pattern for the cooperation which has become a reality. It was through the strong guidance of Chancellor Carmichael, Dr. Cuninggim, and the late Dr. S. C. Garrison, former president of Peabody College, that the Joint University Library and the School of Social Work were established. It seems fitting here to pay tribute to these three educational statesmen who were largely responsible for the establishment of the Nashville University Center.

It will be seen that the Nashville School of Social Work did not come about through a process of mushroom growth. The years intervening between the time of the inception of the idea in the minds of certain individuals and its fruition served as a period of seasoning. During these years the public was getting a more concrete idea as to social services and the need for them. The lack of an adequate number of professionally trained social workers in Nashville and the surrounding region highlighted the need for more workers and workers who were truly professional in their outlook and practice.

Factors Appraised

In April, 1939, an informal group representing Vanderbilt University and Scarritt College met with Miss Marion Hathway, then Executive Secretary of the American Association of Schools of Social Work, in Atlanta to present a joint request that the Association of Schools of Social Work study the Nashville resources and advice concerning desirable steps. Later, sub-committees of local, state, and regional social workers and college professors were organized to study the need for a school in the region.

The following significant findings were presented to Miss Hathway on her visit to Nashville in 1939. In the seven southeastern states (Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi) the estimated number of workers in the public welfare services was 2,162. In the five states of Florida, Kentucky, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee, from which data were received, the number was 1,541, of whom 658, or 42 per cent, were college graduates and 407, or 26.4 per cent, had had some professional training. Of the Tennessee group of 336, forty-seven had attended the emergency training course at Vanderbilt and forty-six had attended accredited schools for six months or less, and fifteen attended nine months or more.

The entire number of workers in Tennessee whose positions may be regarded as professional was estimated as 865. Workers in the employment services, unemployment compensation, and old age insurance programs were omitted from this number.

In six of the seven states mentioned, there were no accredited schools of social work when the study was made in 1939. As a result of this study, it was concluded that the extent of personnel needs, the lack of available schools of social work, the progressive attitude of the state welfare services towards educational preparation, and the regional nature of the center warranted the establishment of a professional school of social work.

Consultation with the American Association of Schools of Social Work

In December 1939, at the request of the presidents of the three cooperating institutions, Miss Hathway came to Nashville to study resources which might indicate the need for a professional school of social work at that time. The available educational resources of the three schools and the desire of the three to cooperate seemed to provide a foundation upon which a school of high standards could be built.

Undergraduate courses in the social sciences offered at Vanderbilt and Peabody, the professional courses offered in the Vanderbilt Schools of Medicine, Law, Nursing and Religion, and in the Peabody departments of Psychology, Education, and Nursing Education, and the undergraduate social work curriculum at Scarritt combined to form a broad base for a cooperative program in social work.

The following recommendations were made by Miss Hathway following her visit to Nashville:

Recommendations:

a. That a school of social and public administration be established for the preparation of personnel for private agencies, the public social services (including the welfare services) and the social insurances. Such a school would obviously have a broad scope related to the development of both private and public social services of various kinds.

b. That in addition the school be so planned as to serve the needs of students primarily interested in other professional study, such as nurses, teachers and religious workers.

c. The curriculum should be based on pre-professional study in the social sciences, easily available through the present resources of the three institutions.

d. The professional curriculum should be broadly planned with the "career" idea in mind. Especially important in the professional curriculum are the areas of case work, group work, public welfare, community organization, and research.

Consultation with Local Groups

Once the Nashville group had decided to sponsor a school of social work, it seemed essential to determine whether other groups within the State of Tennessee were considering such a program. Conferences were held with the faculty of the Social Science Division of the University of Tennessee and with social workers in Memphis, where Southwestern University is located. The use of the state-wide committee mentioned earlier bore out the belief of the group that Nashville was the proper location for a graduate school of social work and in this the Memphis and Knoxville group concurred.

Local social workers became interested in the school, and the Nashville Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers, community agencies, and lay groups gave support to its establishment. The Advisory Council of the school, composed of faculty members drawn from various divisions of the University Center, gave long hours to working out details of the program.

At no point was the program advanced without clearing with the American Association of Schools of Social Work and the American Association of Medical Social Workers, and we are most grateful to Miss Hathway, Miss Leona Massoth, the present executive secretary of the American Association of Schools of Social Work, Miss Sydney Branch, Consultant on Preprofessional Social Work Education to the American Association of Schools of Social Work, and Miss Kate McMahon, Educational Secretary of the American Association of Medical Social Workers, for giving strong guidance at each point. The standardized curriculum suggested by the American Association of Schools of Social Work formed the basis for the program of the Nashville School of Social Work.

On May 15, 1942, word was received in Nashville that the General Education Board, one of the Rockefeller Foundations, had responded to the request of the Nashville University Center by making a grant of $40,000 for a three year period. This, in addition to a contribution from Vanderbilt University, provided the original budget for the Nashville School of Social Work.

Relationship Between the School and the Community

Since its establishment in 1942 we have had a picture of the way in which the professional school contributes to the development of social work programs. Two members of the faculty had been participants in community activities in Nashville for fifteen years, and new members coming on the faculty shared responsibility within their various fields. In addition to serving on committees and boards of social agencies, faculty members spent much time during the first year in addressing groups and interpreting the profession of social work and the need for specialized training. We have seen real progress in this regard, through changed attitudes and increased initiative in the development of new social work programs. During the second and third years, the staff was invited to participate in agency policy forming committees and to help agencies improve standards. Two members of the faculty spent the second summer in reorganizing the Nashville Children's Bureau, now a member of the Child Welfare League of America, and the Nashville Travelers Aid Society.

While these activities were going on within the community, the group sought to interest other faculty members within the three schools in the new pioneering venture. As a result, faculty members of the school were invited to participate in the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences and to become members of the Colloquim of the Institute, which meets monthly. This was the first time women faculty members had been invited to join this group.

Where Do the Students Come From?

From the beginning, the school has drawn a large part of its clientele from the southeastern region. Up to the present time, students have come from twenty states and the District of Columbia, States within this southeastern region and the southwestern region have invited faculty members to participate in state and regional meetings, to conduct institutes within the states, and social workers from over the country have been frequent visitors to the school.

The public, within three brief years, has had a new conception of the social services. Two attitudes were current at the time the school was established, one that the school was to become a finishing school to train young ladies in the social graces; the other that socialistic or communistic theories might be advanced with the idea that the SCHOOL might well be watched. Strong support has come from the three cooperating institutions, the community at large, and the region. The reputation of the three institutions has done much in building good will for the school. Our strong library resources, housed in the new air conditioned Joint University Library across the street from the school, have added much to the program. The long record held by the School of Medicine and Vanderbilt University Hospital as a strong center of research and training has added much to our program. Doctors on the School of Medicine staff, psychiatrists and medical social workers within the Social Service Division of the Hospital have added much to our courses in medical and psychiatric information.

Local agency staff and board members have sought help in improving standards in order that field practice units might be established within their agencies. Up to the present time we have

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A National Examining Unit for Social Work

A Progress Report Prepared for the AASW National Board

By Alice Padgett
Chairman of Civil Service Subcommittee

At its meeting in March 1945 the AASW National Board received a request to consider the establishment of a national examining unit which would prepare test materials for use of civil service and merit systems not currently served by existing programs and to conduct research in methods of measurement appropriate to the social work field. This request came from the Joint Advisory Committee on Training, United States Children's Bureau, Child Welfare Services, and the Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Board. Simultaneously the AASW National Board recognized the importance of examinations in any process of state registration or licensing for social workers and the necessity for considering the possible development of a national examining unit which might be standard-setting and thus provide the basis for reciprocal agreements between states requiring social workers to be registered or licensed. With these two factors in mind, the Board asked that there be a study of examining units already in operation in other professional and occupational fields, that the needs of the social work field for such a unit be studied, and that recommendations be prepared favoring or opposing the establishment of such a unit at an early date.

In May 1945 the Civil Service Subcommittee of the Wartime Committee on Personnel was asked to initiate consideration of the desirability of establishing a national examining unit for social work. The Temporary Committee on Licensing to which the proposal had originally been made had asked, because of its already heavy assignment, to be relieved of the specific technical area of examining for social work.

The Civil Service Subcommittee accepted the assignment and this is the progress report presented to the AASW National Board on November 8, 1945. The membership of the committee is as follows:

Alice Padgett, Assistant Professor of Social Work, Catholic University School of Social Work, representing the American Association of Schools of Social Work and Chairman of the committee.

Edith Baker, Chief, Medical Social Work, U. S. Children's Bureau, representing the American Association of Medical Social Workers.

Mary Mason, Assistant Professor of Social Work, Boston College School of Social Work, representing the American Association of Social Workers.

Philip Schiff, Washington Representative, National Jewish Welfare Board, representing the American Association for the Study of Group Work.

Mrs. Martha Strong Smith, formerly Senior Examiner, Civil Service Commission, representing the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers.

Harry Chester, Personnel Director, Georgia State Department of Health, corresponding member representing the American Association of Social Workers.

Mrs. Elizabeth Payne, Associate Professor of Social Work, University of Southern California, corresponding member representing the American Association of Medical Social Workers.

Mary Sydney Branch, Consultant on Preprofessional Social Work Education of AASSW, corresponding member representing the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

The Civil Service Committee has approached the problem along three lines: (1) it has studied the current methods and techniques of measurement which are applicable to social work; (2) it has studied examining units in other fields; (3) it has invited representatives from agencies and professional schools, to discuss the objectives, services which might be rendered, auspices, and financing of such a project.

Methods and Techniques of Measurement

Mrs. Martha Strong Smith, a member of the committee experienced in the field of examining for social work, reviewed for the committee the highly specialized field of tests and measurements and the recent developments in this field. The committee at all times has kept in mind the several elements in personnel selection: the rating of training and experience, the written examination, the oral examination, and the probationary period.

An added opportunity to consider further the developments in the field of tests and measurements was provided by three prominent psychometricians, with experience in examining for social work, who met with the committee. These psychometricians were:

Dr. Dorothy Adkins, Chief, Social Sciences Unit, Test Development Section, Civil Service Commission, formerly Chief, Examining Section, Social Security Board, and Consultant, American Public Health Association project;

Lt. Col. Marion Richardson, Chief of Personnel Research Classification and Replacement Branch, encompassing more occupations and a greater number of personnel to be tested than any similar program in existence;

Dr. Charles I. Mosier, Chief, Examining Section, State Technical Advisory Service, Social Security Board.

Dr. Adkins' and Dr. Mosier's papers presented at this meeting are published elsewhere in this issue of THE COMPASS. The paper entitled "The Evaluation of Test Techniques in Placement in the Army," also included in this issue, covers in part the material on oral examinations presented by Colonel Richardson.

The committee throughout its discussions has tried to keep in mind the total examination process, with proper consideration of each part: the rating of training and experience, the written examination, the oral examination and the probationary period. It recognizes that some persons mistakenly think only of written examinations in relation to examining. It is aware of the fact that the written examination is known to be reliable; that is, there is consistency in results obtained on two equivalent tests given at different times to the same candidates. It believes that the written test can be used to test for knowledge of facts, knowledge of skills and knowledge of appropriate attitudes but that it cannot screen out the person who despite knowing the appropriate attitudes may fail to practice them. However, it is clear that persons who do not know appropriate attitudes are unlikely, except by chance, to practice them. Disciplined behavior assumes knowledge. A fair degree of correlation doubtless exists between competent performance and intellectual understanding. The committee realizes that questions raised about the written examination are in connection with its validity. In other words, does it measure the particular knowledge or skill which it is designed to measure? The committee fully appreciates the necessity of some form of prevalidation of the written examination and the urgency of finding suitable trial groups for all types of examination. It is also aware of the need for a sound research program directed to the developing of test items in accordance with a sound research program.

One of the reasons some of the newer examining programs use the objective examination instead of using the essay question examination is that subjective judgment is more prevalent in the scoring of the latter than in the objective type of examination.

Realizing that the written examination should be only one of three elements used in predicting the individual's success, the committee turned its attention to the rating of training and experience and the oral examination. It recognizes that the careful rating of training and experience is a very important part of the selection process of professional classes; that relevant training and experience, however, are of value not in themselves but as evidence of knowledge and abilities from which to predict success; that there is at present a lack of standards upon which to base a truly qualitative rating of training and experience and that there is need for further research in this part of the selection process. The basic issue is how much importance should be given to the rating of training and experience in the whole examination process. Because of the difficulties of preparing adequate written examinations for testing supervisory and administrative abilities, there is a tendency to use the rating of training and experience in selection of personnel for higher level jobs.

The committee felt that the interview or oral examination is valuable insofar as it measures aspects of the individual's performance not already better measured by other parts of the selection process and admits that while we have not developed methods of testing for emotional maturity as such, we can test, at least in part, for such elements as ability to get along with people, poise and oral expression. The whole question of personality is not understood too well; therefore, we cannot test it too well. But techniques of measurement have been developed by which that part of the process may be improved. The need for research is equally applicable in this part of the examination process. In all parts of the process, the research should stem from the best available techniques and not from poorer techniques that might well be discarded.

The committee agreed that the probationary period is part of the selection process and that criteria based on research need to be developed for evaluating performance during this period. One of the basic difficulties in this area is that social workers like other professional persons have difficulty in admitting that a person may not have the capacity for growth.

Experience of Other Professional and Occupational Fields

The committee considered the experience of four other groups in their examining programs, namely:

1. American Public Health Association in their examining for public health nursing employment.
2. National Teacher Examinations which examine the product of an educational institution to provide a national rating for individual teachers.
3. The American Institute of Accountants, which is attempting to develop aptitude tests to select young men who are suitable for training in accounting.
4. The National League for Nursing Education, which tests the results of education within the educational institution.

Public Health Nursing

The Merit System Unit of the American Public Health Association,[1] since 1941, has been developing examination material to be used by the states in the selection of public health personnel. The 1939 Amendment to the Federal Social Security Act gave to the U. S. Children's Bureau power to require states to provide for the "establishment and maintenance of personnel standards on a merit basis" in connection with those programs of a public health nature for which the Children's Bureau administers the federal funds made available by the Act. A similar requirement was written into the regulations of the U. S. Public Health Service. To implement these requirements the U. S. Children's Bureau made arrangements with the state whereby money is provided to the states for the purchase of written examinations and at the same time turned to the American Public Health Association, a professional organization, to enlist its assistance.

The states are under no compulsion to use these examinations, but they are making increasing use of what the Merit System Unit has to offer. By January 1945 the subject matter areas in which examinations had been developed were four: Administrative Public Health, Public Health Nursing, Laboratory Work and Environmental Sanitation.

By January 1945 the Unit had prepared eight nursing examinations, ranging from clinic nurses to state directors; 19 laboratory examinations, ranging from a laboratory technician position to the assistant director of a laboratory; three examinations in Sanitary Engineering; and two examinations for Administrative Health officers—a total of 104 examinations in 19 states.

Over 9,000 questions had been developed by January 1945 in the four fields mentioned, during the period from July 1942, when the first examination in Public Health Nursing was prepared by the Unit. The APHA project has averaged approximately $25,000 per year in expenditures. Individual test items have cost $2.00 per item for the use of the item and $5.00 per item for outright purchase.

Examinations for Teachers

The National Teacher Examinations [2] grew out of the concern of school superintendents in the larger city school systems, who in 1936 and 1937 became acutely conscious of the fact that they were being forced by community pressure to employ local persons as teachers and to ignore qualified non-resident teachers.

It was the belief of these groups that there was a crucial need for an examination service which would avoid the costly duplication and uncertainties of locally assembled examinations for teacher candidates; which would give reliable and valid measures; and which would be comparable from year to year and from one school system to another.

Accordingly, the National Committee on Teacher Examinations was formed in 1939 by the American Council on Education in response to the suggestions of teachers, superintendents, and teacher-educators who foresaw the advantages of comparable and objective measures of some of the abilities and cultural achievements of prospective teachers.

The immediate purposes of the National Committee were to arrange for the construction and administration of a battery of teacher examinations, to carry on a continuous program for the improvement of the tests, to study and make available information regarding ways of improving the appraisal of factors not covered by objective examinations, and to promote long-range research programs concerned with teacher guidance and teacher selection.

This service is at present limited to those aspects of intelligence, general culture and academic subject matter achievement which can be measured by objective comparable written tests. Other important factors that determine teaching fitness such as health and physical energy, training, experience, leadership, and other personal characteristics were, of necessity, left to the independent judgment of the local authorities to whom the candidates applied.

The National Teacher Examinations have been administered annually since 1940. Funds for the early development of the project were generously provided by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching which gave $50,000 the first year, $15,000 the second year, and $10,000 the third year.

The fee paid by the candidate covers taking the examination, keeping a record of his test score in a permanent central file, and reporting the test results to one superintendent of schools, and to the candidate. The fee also includes a report to the dean of the college from which the candidate graduated provided the candidate does not specifically state that no report is to be sent to the college. The examining fee for the early examinations was $5.00 per candidate. The examining fee for the 1945 examinations was $7.50 per candidate.

[1] New Methods for the Selection of Public Health Personnel, Reginald M. Atwater and Lillian D. Long, in The Canadian Journal of Public Health, January 1945.

[2] National Teacher Examinations pamphlet published by National Committee on Teacher Examinations of the American Council on Education.

A candidate may have his examination record transmitted at any time to any place where he may wish to submit an application. The examination results are kept as confidential information and are given only on the written request of the individual candidate. No restriction is imposed by the committee regarding candidates repeating the National Teacher Examinations. A candidate may take the examinations as many times as he chooses. Candidates with more than one record must designate the results to be sent (i.e., 1940, 1941, 1942, etc.) at the time a transcript is requested.

These examinations are not intended to substitute for but to add to the present bases of selection. Far from diminishing the use of training records and recommendations from training institutions, the comparable examination results are intended to facilitate more accurate interpretation and to make for more extensive and careful use of training records, including data on personality factors. The use of the examination scores in the selection of teaching candidates is completely a matter of local authority. The weight given to the examinations therefore varies from one school system to another.

Aptitude Test for Accountants

The American Institute of Accountants,[3] interested in attracting good men to the accounting profession, in discovering what qualities are requisite to success and whether or not an individual possesses them, designated a subcommittee of its Executive Committee to investigate the possibility of developing objective standards for measuring an individual's qualifications and to review developments in psychological measurement. The recommendation of this subcommittee that funds be made available to support research in the subject was approved by the Executive Committee which appealed to the members of the Institute for contributions to support the project. From this appeal $56,000 was received which was considered sufficient to support the project for five years beginning 1945.

The Institute's Executive Committee fully recognized that the work might be inconclusive but believed that the possibility of extremely valuable results, leading to improvement of the personnel of the accounting profession, is sufficient to justify the effort.

Groups Which Might Be Served

In addition to considering methods of examining, the committee has given some consideration to the agencies and institutions which might be served. Among these are:

1. Civil service jurisdictions and merit systems throughout the country in their examination of candidates for positions.
2. State programs of registration, certification or licensing in their selection of qualified persons. With the development of state laws regulating social work practice and of voluntary registration plans under private auspices, it was felt the use of national examinations would be important.
3. Professional schools, to test results of education, or in determining aptitude for the profession as a part of selection of students.
4. Private agencies and institutions in their selection of personnel and rating of personnel.

As a second step and as a supplement to its own study of developments in the field of tests and measurements, the committee sought the advice of individual social workers from public and private agencies and professional schools as to: the advisability of establishing an examining unit; groups which might be served by such a unit; suitable auspices; administration and program.

Social workers who have met with the committee thus far are: Miss Jane Hoey, Director, Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Board; Miss Agnes Van Driel, Chief of Technical Training, Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Board; Miss Phyllis Hill, Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Board; Miss Olive Stone, State Technical Advisory Service, Social Security Board; Miss Katherine Lenroot, Chief, U. S. Children's Bureau; Miss Ruth Blakeslee, Director, Merit System Unit, U. S. Children's Bureau; Miss Elizabeth Cosgrove, U. S. Civil Service Commission; Miss Gordon Hamilton, Chairman, Wartime Committee on Personnel; Dr. Helen Wright, Dean, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago; Dr. Walter W. Pettit, Director, New York School of Social Work; Dr. Marion Hathway, School of Applied Social Sciences, University of Pittsburgh; Mrs. Isabel Carter, Pennsylvania School of Social Work, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Representatives from private agencies are to be invited to meet with the committee at an early date.

Agency representatives emphasized the need for research in the allied areas of further definition of the functions of specific jobs and basic definitions in social work as a major objective for an examining unit.

Representatives from the professional schools re-emphasized the research approach and urged that there be no preparation of tests for sale or distribution until there has been experimental testing to show what will and what will not prove

[3] The Development of Aptitude Tests for Accountants, John L. Carey in The Accounting Review, January 1945.

valid. The committee has discussed this viewpoint with the psychometricians and agree that pre-validation is essential.

It was suggested that the examining unit might well concentrate on examinations for professional competence and should begin in a field, such as medical social work, in which there is general agreement as to its professional nature. There was some discussion of the possible use of examinations in relation to selection of students but there was not agreement that examinations could be produced by a central examining unit which would be useful to the individual school.

It was suggested that an examining unit might provide comprehensive examinations for use by the schools and might also provide examinations to graduated students following a work experience for purposes of comparing work performance with performance in school. Consideration is being given in one of the schools to aptitude testing for prospective social work students.

Auspices

It was the general opinion of those persons meeting with the committee that the auspices as well as the administration of the proposed examining unit should be sound and strong in order to secure financial support and public confidence. Several alternatives as to auspice were suggested, namely:

1. Independent auspices, if a strong board could be secured to administer the project.
2. Linking the unit with a "neutral" examining unit such as the College Entrance Examining Unit.
3. Expansion of one of the examining units now serving another field to offer examinations in the social work field.
4. As a part of a professional association.

Although several points of view were expressed, the general feeling was that it is logical for the professional association to assume leadership in an area which is standard-setting to the extent that the establishment and operation of a national examining unit would be.

Cost

It was generally agreed that the smallest examining unit which might be used initially would have a staff composed of a psychometrician, a social worker and one or more clerks. This was thought by some to be too small a unit and it was recognized that additional social workers on a part-time basis would be necessary. The committee agreed that the unit should be responsible to a strong advisory committee. One of the guests of the committee felt that this advisory committee should include lay membership. The desirability, from a public relations standpoint, of soliciting test items from social workers throughout the country was pointed out. This expenditure plus the cost of pre-validation of examinations would have to be included in any estimate of costs. Before there could be any final consideration of the size and cost of the unit, it would be necessary to come to a decision as to whether the unit should consider the total examination process or part of the process and what group or groups it would serve.

It was felt by the committee, and those meeting with it, that in approaching a foundation for financial support, funds should be sought for a five-year period. It was felt that the unit could not and should not try to be self-sustaining or profit-making during the first five years of its existence.

The Committee's Impressions to Date

The Civil Service Committee believes that there would be value in establishing an examining unit for social work, and that the professional association is a logical auspice.

There have been differences of opinion on the part of invited guests around the focus of a unit, initial major objectives, areas of emphasis, possible combinations of approaches, and groups to whom service might be offered and auspices.

There is a decided trend in the thinking of the committee in favor of combining a research program, which it regards as very important, with the offering of examinations for selected groups, preferably, at the outset, for civil service jurisdiction and merit systems in selected job areas. The committee questions interest of a foundation in a project, even for a limited period of time, having pure research as its sole objective.

The committee realizes fully the need for further research in appraising more precisely the knowledges, skills and abilities requisite for competent professional social work performance. It believes that this basic undertaking must be a continuing responsibility of the schools of social work, of the agencies in the field and of the professional associations.

The body of knowledge which does exist and on which there is general agreement, should serve as the basis for examinations. Research already completed in the field of tests and measurements should be given consideration. Future research and planning for social work examinations should be based on the already completed experimentation and should move forward into less well defined areas.

The committee also believes that social work can and should profit from the experience of other professions in developing an examining program.

The possibility of focusing on national examinations would depend to some extent on the recommendations of the Committee on Registration and Licensing of Social Workers. The committee recognizes the greater difficulty of examining for registration or licensing than for specific jobs.

The committee believes that a national examining unit might (1) force further definition of social work; (2) stimulate further development through research in appropriate tests for social work; (3) offer service to specific groups.

As a valuable by-product it would have a tendency to strengthen further the efforts of the professional schools at standardization and unification of curriculum.

Further Plans of the Committee

1. Continue the discussion with agency and professional school representatives as to the nature and scope of such a project.
2. Publish material on technical methods of testing and on experience in other professional and occupational fields.
3. Learn more about developments in regard to aptitude and personality inventory tests.

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Construction and Analysis of Written Tests for Predicting Job Performance

By Dorothy C. Adkins

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Editor's Note: Dr. Adkins' paper provides technical information of special value to social workers who are participating in the development of written tests for selection of personnel for employment. It will also give to social workers who support the merit principle and sound personnel administration an orientation to this very technical field. The Civil Service Subcommittee, of the Wartime Committee on Personnel, is continuing its consideration of tests and measurements. The Compass will publish further discussion on this subject and welcomes comment on Dr. Adkins' paper.

A DOZEN test technicians, if presenting to representatives of another profession the topic of test construction and analysis, would approach the discussion from what might appear to be a dozen different points of view. Yet sufficient community of opinion exists in the field of testing that doubtless the majority would stress very nearly the same type of basic approach to the problem of constructing a good test. I shall attempt to identify this common ground and to inject my own idiosyncrasies only with fair warning.

I. TEST CONSTRUCTION

A. Defining What Is to Be Tested by Written Tests

Construction of a written test requires defining what is to be tested. Although this statement has been parroted to the extent that it seems platitudinous, clear understanding of what it implies is not commonplace. Broadly stated, we must discover those areas in which individual differences should be reflected in test scores. We do not want to test in areas in which individuals do not differ significantly or in areas in which individual differences that do exist are not critical. In the selection of social workers, for example, there is little need to appraise the ability to write legibly (even though typists may disagree), because, through the operation of other selective factors, social work candidates do not differ significantly in this aspect of performance. Measuring height has not been considered essential for social work positions, although it may be considered desirable for evaluating candidates' fitness for membership on the police force. This is a characteristic in which wide differences among candidates may be anticipated but in which such differences are probably not important to success in social work.

With proper coordination of knowledge and skill in the field of test techniques and subject-matter competence applied to defining appropriate test content, useful predictive instruments can be constructed for any professional field in which individual differences in performance can be reliably and independently established. If the production of typists reflects wide individual differences that can be measured, then we approach with confidence the construction of tests to predict these differences. Further, the accuracy of this prediction can be inspected. Every one will agree that social workers, too, do differ in job performance. If competent judges can agree, also, on *which* social workers are superior and *which* ones inferior, great improvements in the selection of social workers should be feasible, and the extent of improvement should eventually be determinable.

B. Supplementation of Written Tests by Other Examining Methods

There would be a general consensus among psychometricians that, for the present, at least, the written test should be only one part of the total examining process for professional and administrative positions. The great majority of industries, civil service jurisdictions, and licensing bodies have required, and doubtless will continue to require for some time to come, certain numbers of years of particular types of education and/or experience. For competitive purposes persons surpassing the minimum requirements are assigned higher scores, depending upon amount, pertinency, and recency. Methods of appraising education and experience have almost of necessity assumed that all persons who have been exposed to educational courses which appear similar and who have drawn salary for work that seems to be of the same relatively broad type have profited from their education and experience to identical degrees. This we know is far from true. I am sure that Dr. Mosier will present a searching analysis of the hypotheses that are made or could be made in evaluating training and experience, so we need not treat the problem at length here. We may, however, go as far as to venture that ratings of education and experience in time will be replaced by objective tests that measure, instead, the *effects* of a person's education and experience on his knowledges, skills, and abilities.

Such a test may require two weeks of the subjects' time for all we know; and no one would claim that we are prepared for such a step now.

Delimitation of the areas of the written test for employment purposes thus far has proceeded on the assumption that no satisfactory paper-and-pencil tests have been developed for testing personality traits such as dependability, tact, cooperativeness, and the complex we know as "the ability to get along with people." Nor can any written test we know guarantee that passers' behavior will reflect socially desired attitudes. This whole area has been relegated with fleeting compunction to the oral interview, which has been subjected to far too little critical scrutiny. Colonel Richardson is planning to present to you some very promising results of experimental approaches to this technique.

C. Definition of Fields in Relation to Test Validity

After this digression, perhaps we can agree that for the present the use of a competitive written test may be limited to appraising pertinent knowledges, skills, and abilities that are distinct from personality factors. In some cases delimitation of the field to be tested and of criteria for exploring the validity[1] of the test is relatively simple. The purpose of a test may be, for example, to appraise knowledge of the 45 sums of pairs of numbers below 10. Here the field *is* in a real sense the 45 addition problems. The simplicity of this situation is somewhat deceptive, for even here questions immediately arise in relation to test form and content that bear on the need for further definition of the field. How should the problems be presented, in written or oral form? Should numerical or verbal symbols be used? What type of item (i.e., completion, true-false, multiple-choice, etc.) should be used? What should be the method of indicating answers? Should the test be a power test or a speed test? If the latter, what time limit should apply? Do all 45 problems have to be presented or will a sampling suffice? It is clear that the original objective must be detailed more precisely. If the objective of a segment of teaching is the ability as at the end of a particular time interval to add all of the pairs correctly in, at most, say, three minutes, when the pairs are presented in a particular way, then a three-minute test consisting of the 45 problems presented in the particular way and at the end of the prescribed learning period may be considered valid for this narrow purpose without further study.

If the problems are not presented in the defined way, if there is time for only a two-minute test, if a different format is desired for test purposes, if only a sampling of the 45 problems is presented, if it is desired to predict ability to learn to do more complicated problems in addition or in the progressively broader fields of arithmetic and mathematics, then one may need to make a special study to determine degree of validity. The appropriate criterion would vary with the particular "if." A shorter test may be correlated with the 45-item test to estimate the validity of, say, 15 items for predicting score on the entire "field" of 45; a 45-item test of ability to add given in the second grade may be correlated with marks in freshman algebra if one is willing to wait that long at the risk of disappointment; and so on.

Thus what seemed to be a simple task of defining a field to be tested leads to some rather complex examining problems. These become more intricate as the scope of the field to be covered expands to cover objectives of a single course of study and of a school curriculum over a period of time, and even more so when an attempt is made to place persons in rank order on the basis of predicted job competence. In the latter case the initial task is to identify a group of knowledges and abilities which may influence job performance and hence which, we hope, will predict job competence. Ideally the criteria by which the validity of the test can be estimated should be established in the very early stages of constructing the test. We need not be, however, and in fact rarely are, entirely right in our first approximations to the prediction of the criterion. Nor do we have to know the optimal weight for each type of knowledge and skill in undertaking construction of a test, if we have some reliable and independent measure of job competence against which to appraise how well our test serves its purpose. It is unfortunate that such a criterion is all too rarely obtainable. On the other hand, an attack on a prediction problem in any particular field need not start from scratch but can capitalize on results of previous work in other fields. Every type of item and all conceivable kinds of knowledge and ability do not have to be explored.

In the process of defining knowledges for test construction, a broad field like social work is broken down into more specific areas, such as knowledge of social case work. As the actual task of constructing a test is more nearly approached, knowledge of social case work is further subdivided into the more detailed facts, concepts, and judgments that constitute this area, until the breakdowns themselves directly suggest test items. No test will include every possible breakdown. It is here that the statistical concept of sampling enters. Just as we can attempt to measure the ability to solve 45 problems by testing on only 15, so we attempt to measure knowledge of an entire field of perhaps several thousand items by testing on only one or two hundred. Although a detailed

[1] The common definition of the validity of a test, that it is the extent to which the test measures what it is supposed to measure, is accepted for purposes of this discussion. The criterion is that which we are trying to measure.

analysis of subject matter is not made in a formal way each time a test is constructed, a competent examiner uses this approach at some stage, perhaps only after a group of items is tentatively assembled, as a check on the adequacy of the sampling of the field.

D. Testing Abilities as Well as Knowledge

It is usually considered profitable in testing for professional competence to test abilities in addition to knowledge. Of two social workers who have acquired the same factual knowledge, it is reasonable to presume that the one who is more intelligent, who is better able to think through a problem, and who can meet a new situation more readily, is more likely to be competent on the job. If this is true, we must not limit our tests to knowledge alone, but can use profitably results already available in the field of abilities testing.

Psychologists are not yet in complete agreement on the question of general intelligence versus more specific abilities. Many believe that there are not only a number of specific abilities, such as verbal reasoning and facility with numbers, but also a general factor. Others are convinced that general intelligence is just a sort of average of an as yet incompletely known hodgepodge of specific abilities. Whichever view is correct, it is certain that ability tests can be constructed which are useful in predicting academic achievement and on which occupational groups at the upper professional levels will do better than those at the lower levels. We may be practically sure, too, that if we had adequate measures of basic abilities social workers and accountants would be found to differ significantly in the *pattern* of abilities most conducive to success.

Granted that written tests may be used to measure both knowledge and ability, question arises as to the value of separate tests of knowledge and ability versus a single test that attempts to measure both. So far as I know, this question has never been satisfactorily answered by an experiment, which is, of course, what is needed. Both approaches have been used. With separate tests, the test of knowledge of subject matter is likely to be constructed from too limited a point of view; it tends to test mere memory for facts. The test of abilities, on the other hand, may appear to the candidates to bear little relation to the job. From the standpoint of public relations, one can offer quite convincing arguments in favor of a single test to cover both knowledge and ability. Efforts in this direction are sometimes palpably absurd. If one tries to construct only a disguised intelligence test, or an abilities test "flavored" with subject matter, he may end with some such farce as "If a social worker adds 2 and 2, what answer should she obtain?" when he is interested only in knowing whether the candidate can add. From the standpoint of nicety of measurement and disregarding the element of public relations, doubtless psychometricians would prefer to try to measure separately various factors of knowledge and ability, or at least to identify by one of the mathematical factor analysis techniques the several components that enter into scores on a single test. This latter approach may prove to be fruitful, especially since it may be impossible to prepare a written information test that is not appreciably affected by verbal factors of the sort that determine reading ability and verbal reasoning.

E. Constructing Individual Test Items

So far we have touched upon some of the more general problems of how tests are developed. Let us turn briefly to some of the more specific considerations that bear on the task of constructing the individual items that go to make up a test. A test item, whether free-answer (essay) or objective, should present a definite and clear task. It should elicit responses of such a nature as to permit the inference that persons who respond in one way will differ from those who respond in other ways. A test item for predicting job performance should be such that the inference can be correctly drawn that persons who give one answer (or type of answer) will be, on the average, better qualified than those who give other answers. Such prediction made from a single item is not very trustworthy. Few single bits of information are essential. But if each of a group of items is discriminating in the right direction, even though with imperfect accuracy, then a prediction based on the group of items can be made with greater dependability.

Large-scale test development projects are confined largely to tests of the short-answer type. This form, as against the essay, has the advantages that the scoring can much more readily be made objective and reliable, so that a candidate's responses yield the same score when evaluated by different persons and so that a candidate obtains the same relative score when he takes different forms of the same test. The objective type permits a much broader sampling of the subject matter or abilities that it is desired to test. This opportunity for wider coverage permits increased reliability and validity. It may be claimed that objective tests are useful only for testing possession of factual knowledge; and it must be conceded that many of them in the past have tested little else. Fortunately, this is not an inherent defect of the form, but only a limitation of the item constructors. Objective tests can be developed to test the abilities to draw proper conclusions from given data, to select which one of several principles applies, to classify and organize data, to select the data necessary to solve a problem, or to solve problems in unfamiliar context or with insufficient data.

In the construction of an objective test item, some test technicians would say that the first consideration is to set a problem or task that will be clear to all of the candidates. I would amend this principle to indicate that the task need be clear only to the better candidates. In general, the task may be but *need not necessarily* be clear also to the poorer candidates. If only the better candidates understand the task and give a particular response while the poorer candidates do not understand the task and hence do not give the same response as that of the better candidates (except by chance), the item may be just as discriminating as an item in which all candidates understand the problem, and possibly more so. One word of caution, however, should be inserted. We must guard against achieving difficulty merely by giving undue weight to verbal factors when what we are interested in appraising is understanding of basic concepts.

Good test items cannot be merely excerpted from a book. Although written source materials are of inestimable value to the item constructor, his is a creative task of selecting content that will be appropriate and likely to yield a selective item; of developing that content into a statement of a problem, and perhaps several alternative solutions to the problem; of inserting suitable qualifying statements; of adding necessary context and deleting unnecessary verbiage; of presenting controversial issues without making a commitment; of avoiding "specific determiners" or extraneous clues to the answer; of putting the concept into a form that provides a natural way of asking the question and that at the same time provides ease and objectivity of scoring. These are only a smattering of the factors to be considered in constructing a test item.

F. Participation of Subject-Matter Specialists in Test Construction

Whether an item will differentiate the competent from the incompetent is a matter of the examiner's judgment until there is opportunity to try the item out on persons whose job performance is known and to discover whether it does, in fact, yield the desired discrimination. For this reason participation in the construction of examinations in specialized subject-matter fields by persons who know the subject matter is highly desirable. Even after they have been trained in test construction, not every item they construct or tentatively approve can be expected to be useful. Nevertheless, such items have much greater chance of yielding discrimination than those prepared solely by test technicians with no competence in the subject-matter field in question. For purposes of argument it may be admitted that, given sufficient time, the psychometrician, like the monkey at the typewriter, could write every possible test item in the subject-matter field. Then, granted opportunity for trying out the items on persons of known competence, it would be possible to select items for assembly into a test that would be just as good as the test that could be assembled after a tryout of items prepared in collaboration with subject-matter consultants. The former test, composed of a selection of items based on a tryout of a large number constructed solely by psychometricians, would be much more costly to construct. If, as has often been the case when there is immediate need for a test, there is no time for tryout at all, injection of subject-matter competence into the initial development of the test is even more essential. Aside from improving the chances that tests will predict job performance, participation of subject-matter consultants makes a testing project more acceptable to the professional field in question, especially in the early stages of the project, at a time when such acceptability is often critical.

If in the case of an employment test the item constructors are sufficiently familiar with the subject matter and abilities concerned, if they have had sufficient access to job information, and if they have been fairly ingenious in selecting content for items and in working the content into item form, there is reasonable expectation that predictions of job success on the basis of scores on a large group of items will be significantly better than forecasts made without a test. The expectation of increased efficiency of prediction may be verified and the extent of the improvement determined by research methods.

II. ANALYSIS OF TEST RESULTS

A. The Concept of a Standardized Test

Doubtless all of you have heard good things of "standardized tests"; by the very nature of the term they sound more exact and hence more to be desired than tests not so designated. I suggest, however, that the term lacks a precise meaning and that various tests to which it is applied differ markedly with respect to some of the very characteristics on which "standardization" may be taken for granted. A standardized test almost invariably is accompanied by directions for administration which are to be followed by whoever administers the test. The directions cover such factors as uniform timing and provision for the same amount of instruction and practice material for all subjects, so that everyone takes the test under essentially the same conditions. A standardized test also almost always comes equipped with a scoring key, and the scoring is typically objective. Thus the effects of administration and scoring of the test by different persons are minimized. Fairly frequently, normative data are provided with standardized tests, showing standards of attainment for various groups for which the test is thought to be appropriate. For example, the frequency distributions of raw scores on an achievement test in the social studies may be

given for 8th-, 9th-, and 10th-grade pupils, together with some measure of the average and variability for each grade. These distributions are obtained by administering the test to sample groups of pupils in each of the three grades. To the extent that the samples are large enough and sufficiently representative, the results may be applied to other groups.

Ideally, standardized tests not only have these characteristics, but they also have been subjected to more refined research to establish their difficulty, reliability, and validity, the equivalence of different forms provided, and the appropriateness of the weights at which separate parts are combined. In practice they differ appreciably in the extent to which research methods have been applied in investigating these characteristics. We shall discuss in greater detail the concepts involved in such research, because they constitute the core of statistical analysis of test data.

B. Test Difficulty

The basis of all approaches to the problem of analyzing the difficulty of a test or of a test item is the performance on the test or item of a defined group of subjects—say male 8th-graders in urban schools, white 16-year-olds in Alabama, or all persons who have filed a particular civil service examination application on time, met whatever minimum requirements there are, and appeared for and completed the written test. Particular attention is called to the importance of the definition of the group; difficulty for another group may differ considerably.

In the case of a test as a whole, difficulty is determined by the frequency distribution of the scores of the defined group. For a single test item which is scored either right or wrong, difficulty is determined by the percentage of the defined group who get the item correct.[2] It will be seen that this percentage is only a special case of a frequency distribution.

The difficulty of a test (and hence of its component items) has an important bearing on its value for its purpose. A test that is below the level of abilities of the poorest subjects is of no value in discriminating among the subjects. Similarly, a test that is too difficult even for the best subjects gives us no information for predicting which subjects are superior. It is pretty well accepted that as a general rule the average difficulty of the items in a test should correspond to the average ability of the subjects; that is, the items should be such that, on the average, about half of the subjects will answer them correctly. If, however, the test is to be used to select only a few outstanding subjects, it should be much more difficult; and if it is to weed out only a few extremely poor subjects, it should be much easier. Mere appropriateness of difficulty does not guarantee the value of a test. Test difficulty may, in fact, be exactly as desired and yet the test be completely worthless for the purpose for which it is intended. Proper difficulty, then, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. The test must be, in addition, reliable and valid.

[2] Although a few psychometricians have designed special ways of defining and analyzing test and item difficulty, the concepts presented herein serve most practical purposes.

C. Test Reliability

The reliability of a test refers to the extent to which the results of the test can be verified after a period of time or regardless of the particular items. Stated inversely, reliability refers to the extent to which chance factors affect test results. Several methods of estimating test reliability have been developed. One of the common ones is the test-retest method, by which scores obtained on the first administration of a test are correlated with scores obtained on a second administration of the same test. This method has the defects that if the interval between the two administrations is too short, practice and memory factors make the estimated reliability too high; whereas if the interval is too long, changed conditions—forgetting, variable opportunities for practice, and the like—may make the correlation too low. A method which overcomes some of these defects is that of administering comparable or equivalent forms of a test at the same time and correlating the scores on the two forms. The difficulty with this approach is that comparability has been inadequately defined. Tests which look alike, or in which pairs of items are matched throughout on an inspectional basis, do not meet the requirements for a sound concept of comparability, a matter discussed more fully later in this paper. Improved methods of estimating test reliability, which overcome the difficulties of these classical techniques, have been developed recently but are outside the limits of this discussion.

It is desirable that the reliability of a test be estimated before it is used. A study for this purpose is not always possible in the face of practical demands. Fortunately this does not mean that a test developed by competent psychometricians and subject-matter consultants is likely to have a reliability coefficient of .00. Many of the factors that influence reliability are now known—the objectivity of the scoring, the type of item, the number of items, the lack of ambiguity of the items, and the independence of the items, to enumerate only a few. Hence tests often can be developed with considerable assurance that their reliability is reasonably satisfactory. To be certain that the reliability is as high as it should be or that it is as high as it can be made under whatever limitations of testing time, type of item, and the like, are imposed, an experimental administration of the test followed by analysis of the results is needed.

D. Test Validity

It was stated earlier that regardless of the suitability of the difficulty of a test, it had to be not only reliable but also valid if it were to be useful. The test must be valid *for the purpose for which it is to be used*. The term validity should not be used in a vacuum. A test satisfactorily valid for one end may be, and often is, totally worthless for another. At this point the topic of test analysis dovetails with test construction, for the objectives that lead to the process of defining or delimiting the areas to be tested must be consistent with the purpose for which validity is desired. To the extent that the definition of areas to be tested is satisfactorily achieved, the test is valid for its purpose. To demonstrate the extent to which the test is valid, one needs a measure of whatever was to be tested that is independent of the test itself. One can resort to all sorts of statistical maneuverings with scores on a test and never fully establish its validity if access to an independent criterion is lacking. Further, the criterion measures must themselves be sufficiently reliable to be worth bothering with. No test can predict a criterion that has no reliability. This is one of the serious problems in improving tests for employee selection.

The typical evaluation of performance or service rating, as used in both private and public agencies, is at worst useless and at best unsatisfactory as a criterion against which to assess tests designed to predict job performance. Different raters apply different standards. The raters have had varying opportunities to observe job performance. They tend to rate everyone "above average." Positions grouped together for classifiaction purposes may actually differ in important ways, so that there is no reason to expect ratings on them to be comparable or to suppose that the same selection tests should apply. Probably the most fruitful approach to this difficulty is to develop special criterion measures against which tests can be validated. Such measures may advantageously be broken down into components some of which one and some another part of the test may predict. Several pitfalls of service ratings are avoided by the use of ratings that have no purpose other than to serve as a criterion for test analysis. If several ratings can be secured for each subject, the reliability of the criterion need not be unknown, as it so often is for service ratings. And if the ambiguous cases, that is, those on which there is disagreement among raters, are excluded from the study, the chances for demonstrating that a test does in fact predict a reliable criterion should be markedly improved.

The performance of would-be employees who have been screened out by whatever selection devices were used does not get rated at all. To the extent that this screening had validity, the distribution of employee performance is curtailed so that there may be little opportunity to demonstrate the value of a test that is very effective toward the lower end of the scale. As noted before, a test useful for discriminating among subjects at one end of the scale may break down completely at the other. This effect is determined by the difficulty of the test in relation to the group for which it is used.

E. Special Problems of Prevalidation

Attempts to "prevalidate" a selection test (that is, to establish its validity before it is used for actual selection purposes) always face the problem of curtailed distributions of both test scores and criterion scores unless an agency is venturesome enough to hire all comers. This condition has been approximated during the war period, during which, however, the cut-off in the distributions probably has been transferred to the upper ends. Statistical techniques for "correcting" for curtailment in either the test variable or the criterion variable or both are available. Although the conditions for their application can not always be met, they at times enable us to approximate the validity of the test.

Another problem in prevalidation is that types of tests or particular test items that are valid for a candidate group may differentiate not so well or even not at all among employees, who through experience on the job may all have learned to do things that are within the province of only the best of the candidates. The experimenter is also faced with the need to protect the confidential nature of test materials if he expects to use the final test in ways that have important bearing on persons' lives. "Leakage" destroys not only the confidence of the candidates but also may nullify whatever validity the test otherwise would have had.

F. Analysis of Individual Test Items

From analysis of the relationship of a total test to a criterion, the next step is to investigate the relationship of each item to the criterion. Thus, by any of a number of statistical techniques, all more or less close approximations to correlation coefficients, one estimates the correlation of each item with the criterion. He then discards or tries to improve those with little or negative validity and attempts to discover the characteristics of the more valid items so that he can construct additional ones that are at least as good. The statistical analysis may even be carried a step further, to investigation of the validity of each choice in a multiple-choice item. Those alternatives which discriminate in an unexpected way are then revised or replaced. There are still further item analysis methods for taking into account the interrelationships of the items as well as their relationships with the criterion.

Because of the difficulty of obtaining reliable and useable independent criterion measures, many

experimenters have resorted to an "internal" criterion, which simply means the total score on the test itself, in an effort to improve written tests. Let it be clear that this is *not* a method of validating a test. If the test as a whole does not have validity, this process can never yield it. What the process does do is to select items which tend to measure whatever the test as a whole measures. If the test is measuring what it is *intended* to measure, then the least valid items can be culled out by this device. One further word of caution is needed: "validation" against an internal criterion may lead to very erroneous conclusions if the total test is measuring more than one factor, as is typically true of employment tests. The process in inexperienced hands may lead to the selection of items of more and more homogeneous content, with the result that coverage of the finally selected items is so narrowed that actual validity is reduced. Briefly, the solution is to set up separate internal criterion scores for each factor present in the total score.

G. Equivalent Forms of a Test

Mention was made earlier of comparable or equivalent forms of tests. In a large-scale testing program there is need for interchangeable tests if one wants to be able to compare the results of a test given to the same individuals more than once or to large groups of individuals at different times, in order to minimize the effects of practice and leakage, respectively. Items paired off according to difficulty and apparently in the same field of knowledge or requiring the same ability do not insure the comparability of two forms of a test. The tests may not yield the same type of score distribution; and the items may not in fact be in the same field, so that the tests would not be sufficiently highly correlated to be treated as interchangeable. An experiment can be set up that will yield comparable tests, although the conditions for such an experiment are not always administratively feasible. Satisfactorily equivalent forms of a test can be developed by administering to a single group of at least, say, 200 cases, somewhat over two times as many items as are needed for a single form of a test and by controlling practice effects and the sampling of the population for which the test is to be used. In the interests of expediency, certain approximations may be made. If, for example, one can assume two groups of subjects to be equivalent with respect to the knowledge and abilities tested in the test on the basis of information *other* than their performance on the test, he can administer one of two forms to one of the two groups and the other form to the other group and adjust the tests somewhat in accordance with the results. He has made a big assumption, however, and he can never obtain the correlation between the two forms by this method.

H. Weighting the Components of a Test

In combining parts of a written test to get scores on the total written test, and in combining written test scores, ratings of education and experience, and oral interview scores to get scores on a broader examination process, the question of the importance or weight to be attached to each part arises. For either type of combination, if reliable external criterion scores were available for prevalidation, the correlation of each part with the criterion and the intercorrelations of the parts could be computed. Then a technique is available (multiple regression analysis) that would tell us at what weights the parts should be combined in order to yield the maximum correlation with the criterion. Combining the parts at these optimal weights, instead of at weights set up to accord with personal opinion, gives the highest possible predictive efficiency to the particular selection devices used.

Lacking an external criterion, as we so often do, weights are established to reflect what is thought to be the importance of the several parts. The exactitude of the operation of such weights, however, is more apparent than real. This is true because the *effective* weight of one variable in combination with others is dependent on its variability and on its correlation with the other variables. Other things being equal, the part which has the highest standard deviation or the highest correlation with other parts has the greatest influence in determining the relative standing of the subjects on the total test. In some instances, then, it is desirable to adjust the scores on some variables to equate variability and to take into account the intercorrelations of the variables before assigning the "arbitrary" weights that are supposed to reflect their importance.

In this discussion of the field of test construction and analysis, the purpose has been to indicate clearly the high spots without obscuring the complexities of some of the problems that arise. An attempt has been made to show the types of short-cuts that may be profitable, the advantage that may be taken of previous experience in the field of testing, and the types of approximations to which resort may be made in conducting analyses of test results. The close interrelationships of test construction and the analysis of test results has been stressed throughout. Ideally, one would never undertake to construct a test without planning an experiment to demonstrate or improve its value; and one would never conduct a research on test results without constructing a better test thereafter. Although the model test has perhaps not yet been developed and the perfect research project not yet completed, we are in a better position to improve test construction practices and to adapt our research procedures to the exigencies of the moment if we have an awareness of what our goal should be.

Rating of Training and Experience in Public Personnel Selection

By Charles I. Mosier

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Editor's Note: Although the principles outlined by Mr. Mosier are applicable to the selection of candidates for professional social work positions, Mr. Mosier has written in broad terms about the selection of personnel for the public service, of which professional social workers form only a minute proportion. He assumes that the selection of personnel is directed toward filling positions which have been carefully defined as to the responsibilities and duties involved.

Minimum educational and experience requirements are often established in order to rule out, early in the selection process, those persons who do not have the skills necessary to adequate performance. The analysis of education and experience as a basis for prediction of successful performance is appropriately used in the establishment of comparative ratings for candidates who have met the minimum requirements. Other techniques which are used are the written and oral examination and the probationary period. Whenever a rating of training and experience is to be used, the best techniques should be employed. This paper does not describe these techniques in detail, but tends more to show the inaccuracy of some of the methods customarily followed.

Because Mr. Mosier is not concerned primarily with the selection of persons for professional positions, he uses the term *experience* throughout his paper to cover *general education, professional education* and *employed experience.* He does not wish thereby to minimize the value of professional education gained through continuous full-time study in residence as the best preparation for certain types of positions. If professional education requirements are established as minima for a position, the principles outlined by Mr. Mosier would still apply in the ranking of applicants meeting the minimum requirements.

Mr. Mosier questions or denies some of the assumptions on which social workers have been operating. Comment on Mr. Mosier's paper is invited and The Compass will publish further discussion of this subject.

THE rating of experience including training,[1] like the use of written and oral examinations, is essentially a problem of prediction. Experience is important, not for its own sake but as a basis for predicting success on a particular job. This is true whether the rating is on an all-or-none basis (as it is in the application of minimum qualifications standards) or is designed to result in a rank order ranging from those candidates presumptively most competent to those whose competence is assumed to be questionable.

In establishing minimum qualifications we are, in effect, saying that applicants whose experience, academic and otherwise, is less than the prescribed standard are such poor risks that we can predict they will be unsuccessful, whereas we can reasonably predict that those who do possess the requisite experience will succeed on the job.

When we assign quantitative scores to particular patterns of experience we are saying that those people with higher scores are more likely to be successful than those with lower scores. This quantitative rating of experience presupposes that among the candidates for employment there are differences in the patterns of experience presented. Moreover, these differences in pattern are assumed to be a basis for predicting job success. Where the qualifications are high and the salary is low, only persons who barely meet the minimum standards will be attracted to the job. In this case no purpose is served by rating the experience; predicted job success would be the same for all candidates and the rating would make no contribution to the selection process. Similarly, where the job is of such a nature that success cannot be predicted from patterns of previous experience—within the range offered by the candidates—there is no point in quantitative rating. An example of such a job is that of messenger.

That qualification, "within the range of potential candidates," is important and should not be overlooked. Among all conceivable persons differences in experience may be a basis for predicting job success, but when the range is narrowed to that group applying for the examination these differences may become so slight as to afford no reliable basis for designating one applicant as a better employment risk than another.

* The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Social Security Board.

[1] Throughout this discussion the term experience is used to include both educational experience and job employment.

Prediction Presupposes Accurate Facts

Prediction always proceeds from facts known at the time of prediction to an estimate of future behavior. It presupposes the existence of accurate facts, accurately known and unambiguous in meaning. The nature of the data on which ratings of experience are based places, therefore, very definite limits on the accuracy with which the most refined technique can predict success. The fact that an individual has had four years of college training can, of course, be accurately known. Whether its meaning is unambiguous is open to some question. That meaning will depend in part on which college, on what grades were made and on what courses were studied. Similarly, the fact that an individual has had four years of experience in social work is a fact that can be determined with some degree of accuracy, although there may be differences in interpretations as to whether a particular job is or is not in the social work field. Its meaning, however, insofar as the prediction of job performance is concerned, depends not so much on the number of years of experience as on the nature of the duties and still more on what was learned during those years of experience. Even when number of years of experience is being rated, the evaluation is limited by the way in which the applicant supplies the information. Many a candidate has received a high score, not because his experience was good, but because he described it well; and candidates with good experience have been rejected because their descriptions of it were poorly stated in relation to a particular job.

Relationship Between Facts and Possible Job Success

The second necessary condition for prediction is that there be a relationship between the known facts and future job success. It is possible to determine an individual's height with as high a degree of accuracy as desired; there is, moreover, little question as to its interpretation. However, height is not used for predicting success in most jobs because there is no reason to believe that there is any relation whatever between this physical characteristic and the individual's satisfactory performance of his duties.

The determination of the relationship between particular experience and job success is a technical problem of extreme difficulty, and one where the limitations of the basic data make us question the value of too great refinement in technique. A further factor complicating the problem is the requirement that not only must experience predict job success, but, to be useful in selection, it must predict aspects not already measured by other more reliable measures.

Preoccupation with the number of years of training and of experience should not blind us to the fact that we are not interested in training or in work experience as such; our interest is rather in the knowledges, skills, and abilities which have been acquired or demonstrated through this training and experience. We are not interested in the fact that an individual was in residence on a particular college campus for a particular number of months. So was the janitor! Rather, we are concerned with the question: "Has an individual who has pursued a certain course of study or held a certain job thereby acquired knowledges and skills which an individual without such training is much less likely to possess?"

Experience May Afford a Demonstration of Knowledge

Experience may not only indicate in a general way the knowledges and skills which have been acquired during the period of training; it may also afford a demonstration of the existence of knowledges, skills or abilities, however they have been acquired. On a statistical basis, one can predict a higher level of general intelligence among college graduates than among high school graduates. This is not to imply that the increased intelligence is acquired through college experiences, but rather that the selective effect of the four years of college training has tended to eliminate those unable to demonstrate at least a minimum level of ability. Work experience may also assume importance in the prediction of success, not because of knowledges acquired, but because the satisfactory performance of a particular job may show that the individual possesses certain skills or abilities.

Because we do believe there is a relationship between success in certain types of jobs and the knowledges acquired or demonstrated in certain types of training and experience, there is a strong tendency to generalize this to the unwarranted conclusion that experience is significant in and of itself. Any careful consideration of the problem of rating experience must scrupulously avoid this error and concentrate rather on the abilities acquired or demonstrated by the experience and on the relationship between those abilities and future job performance. This latter relationship cannot validly be taken on faith, although in practice it often is. The shift from experience as such to the underlying knowledges and abilities reopens the question: "Is the indirect evidence afforded by a record of experience the best way of measuring those underlying knowledges and abilities?"

The Inductive and the Deductive Method

In the problem of prediction two approaches are possible. The first of these we may consider as the pure inductive approach. The records of successful and unsuccessful employees (including among the unsuccessful employees those whose probability of success was so slight that they never secured employment) are analyzed statistically to

determine which patterns of experience characterize the successful employee and differentiate him from the employee who is unsuccessful. The inductive method, although it has much to recommend it, is essentially wasteful; many types of relationships among training, experience and success will be investigated even though there is little probability that the investigation will prove fruitful.

A second and preferable approach is the formulation of careful hypotheses as to the expected relationship between experience and success and verification of these hypotheses by actual observation. Since most schemes for the rating of training and experience have never gone beyond the state of formulating *a priori* hypotheses, the necessity of vertification cannot be overemphasized. However careful the *a priori* judgment may be, however competent the consultant whose judgment is used to set tentative values or patterns of training and experience, full reliance on the rating of training and experience as a valid means of predicting success can come only after each hypothesis has been carefully tested against the actual facts of success or failure on the job.

Procedures for Evaluation

Under the second approach, two procedures are available for evaluating the experience of an individual applicant for a particular position. The first of these may be characterized as impressionistic. A reviewer, using certain written standards as guides, reads over the total pattern of training and experience and in the light of those standards assigns a quantitative evaluation based upon his over-all impression of the value of the training and experience. However carefully the standards may be formulated, this procedure in the final analysis rests upon the subjective judgment of the one or two reviewers. Even with the most competent reviewers, it is highly unlikely that they will possess the necessary degree of clairvoyance to make predictions which are significantly better than guesses.

The alternative procedure involves first, the evaluation of the various aspects of experience, that is, the kind and amount of training, the various jobs held, and second, the combination of these values for the applicant's particular pattern into a composite best prediction of success. If this prediction is to be a *best* prediction, the weight assigned each type of experience should result from statistical investigation of the actual probabilities of success demonstrated by persons offering that particular qualification. When such statistical weights are lacking, it is necessary to fall back upon weights assigned as the result of the consensus of competent judgment. Moreover, any combination of individual weights to yield a composite evaluation must, if it is to be effective, take into account the interrelationships among the various types of experience and success, as well as the value of each type of education or experience. No matter how good the consensus of opinion may be, the weights should be subjected to later verification against the actual facts. The weights judgmentally determined are in the nature of hypotheses; they should be considered as tentative and merely as the best guesses which are available in the absence of information.

Hypotheses Which Have Proved Valuable

In the assignment of values to particular patterns of training and experience there are certain hypotheses which appear fruitful and have been extensively followed over the past six years and more by state merit systems and civil service agencies in consultation with subject-matter experts. One assumption which deserves mention only because it has occasionally been used, although it is far too gross for any adequate results, is that the probability of success increases with the mere aggregate length of experience (including educational experience). This procedure completely ignores such questions as the pertinency of the education and the relatedness of the experience to the job in question.

Where minimum educational qualifications are set, an hypothesis implicit in their use is: there is a minimum of education which is requisite before any amount of experience has value. This may be illustrated by the position of statistician. Unless the individual has had basic instruction in statistical procedures and statistical theory, it may be argued that no amount of experience in adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing figures as a statistical clerk will produce the skills necessary in a statistician. This minimum of education which is required as a base upon which experience is to build may vary from grammar school for some jobs through graduate education for others. However, each time a minimum requirement of education is imposed, it implies that such a degree of education is necessary if experience is to have value; it implies, moreover, that no amount of experience without such education can result in the necessary knowledges, skills, and abilities. As far as the writer knows, the assumption has never been tested against fact.

The reaction of certain interested groups toward the practice of setting minimum educational requirements should not obscure the fact that for most jobs minimum requirements of experience are also set. The hypothesis involved is substantially the same as that with respect to education, namely, that there is a minimum of experience which is necessary to a reasonable assurance of successful performance and for which no amount of educa- may be substituted.

This hypothesis appears most plausible for the higher classes in any occupational series. The senior clerk, the principal accountant, the

advanced statistician, or the principal case work supervisor are those where it is reasonable to say that a minimum amount of experience in an actual job situation is an essential prerequisite and that the possession of a Ph.D. without such actual experience would not, in all probability, lead to adequate performance on the job.

A third hypothesis usually accepted is that between these limits of minimum education and minimum work experience, education and experience may each be considered the equivalent of the other. In speaking of experience and education which are equivalent, we speak, of course, of education and experience at the same level of pertinence. It is not proposed, of course, that experience as an accountant is the equivalent of graduate social work training for a social work position; nor on the other hand is it proposed that graduate social work training is the equivalent of experience as an accountant when an accounting position is in question. It is proposed, however, as an hypothesis to be followed until it can be verified or rejected, that the most closely related experience is the equivalent of the most closely related education. It would be possible, of course, to give greater weight to the most pertinent experience than to the most pertinent education. When, however, the range between the minimum required education and the minimum required experience is considered, such differential weighting leads to both technical and administrative difficulties.

Another hypothesis, sometimes ignored in the establishment of systems for the rating of training and experience, is that there is a maximum of experience beyond which no increase in competence is either acquired or demonstrated. Let us assume that an individual's experience has all been as closely related to the job for which he applied as possible. During his first year of successful employment he will have learned a great deal; he will have met new situations and have learned the methods of dealing with them; he will have acquired skills which he did not formerly possess; and by holding the job over the period of a year he has demonstrated definite abilities requisite to the job for which he is applying. In his second year, however, the number of new problems as compared with the situations previously met becomes proportionately smaller and this decrease in the skills acquired continues until at some stage—after 2, 5, 10 or 20 years—further experience neither results in new knowledge or skill nor provides any additional demonstration of his ability.

In fact it may be argued, and with some cogency, that there is a certain point beyond which continued experience indicates, not an increased, but a decreased probability of success. If one were being literal minded, he would give negative credit for additional experience beyond this critical point. An example will serve to demonstrate this point. Let us consider applicants for a position as principal clerk. The individual who, at the end of 5 years of work has served 2 years as senior clerk is, it would seem, a better risk than the individual who has spent 20 years as senior clerk without advancing further. Although the example has been chosen from the clerical field, the principle is applicable to technical jobs as well. The difference between the two fields lies in the number of years of experience necessary before the point of detrimental return is reached. We are not proposing that in actual practice applicants receive negative credit for experience. Such a proposal would be wholly unacceptable to the lay public and would result in public reaction so unfavorable as to offset any possible benefits that might be derived. The suggestion is presented merely to strengthen the plausibility of the hypothesis of an upper limit.

In theory, at least, the corresponding hypothesis holds for education, namely, that there is a maximum of education beyond which no increase in job performance is likely to result and that there may be a limit beyond which any increased education actually indicates reduced probability of success on a particular type of job. In practice, these limits are not usually reached in the patterns of education actually offered by candidates for a particular position. They may, however, actually be reached. In a much depressed labor market college graduates may be available as junior key operators. The fact of college education would in all probability be detrimental to successful adjustment in card punching. For most professional jobs, however, the theoretical maximum of education need concern us only in the case of those few individuals who collect college degrees very much as an Indian collect scalps. While in some cases this collection of degrees reveals a love of learning, in others it is indicative of an unwillingness to face the realities of "full-time paid employment." Those who remain within the cloistered halls far beyond the normal maximum are not always correspondingly good employment risks. Of the hypotheses thus far presented, however, that of excessive education is the least useful in the practical examining situation.

We have, of course, assumed throughout this discussion that experience directly pertinent to the duties of the job is more predictive of success than experience which is less pertinent. A corollary of this assumption is that some experience is so wholly unrelated as to have no predictive value whatever.

Assigning Values to Experience

This easy generalization must be given concrete expression by the assignment of particular values to particular experience as related to particular

classes of jobs. It is in assigning these values that the highest degree of competence on the part of both the personnel technician and the subject-matter expert is called for. It is far more desirable to combine the judgments of several competent persons than to place reliance on the judgment of a single individual, however competent he may be. As we have indicated, the ideal method is to determine the weights for each type of job from an actual analysis of the probability of success or failure among those individuals possessing that particular level and kind of experience.

When the values are assigned on the basis of judgment, it is assumed that there would be a marked relationship between judged pertinence and the probability of success. This assumption, of course, requires verification.

A number of techniques have been proposed for the systematic assignment of values to varying types of experience. The one which seems to have the most to recommend it is one used by several of the state merit systems serving social security agencies. In this procedure all of the applications for a particular position, for example, visitor, are studied and each type of experience offered is copied from the application on a separate 5 x 8 card. The resulting deck of cards shows all of the types of experience actually offered by applicants for the visitor's position. The cards are then sorted into a number of piles, with the most valuable experience in the highest pile, the least valuable experience in the lowest. The sorting is done independently by a number of persons who are presumed to be competent to judge the relative value of the several types of experience in predicting success as a welfare visitor. The average of the pile number in which a card was placed by the several judges is taken as the value to be assigned that type of experience. This method has the advantage of giving systematic consideration to the types of experience actually offered rather than of those which might be offered but were not. Moreover, it provides for a systematic determination of the consensus of a group of judges. Its value depends on the adequacy with which the types of experience were actually described by the candidates and on the extent to which the judges were able to anticipate the probable success or failure of persons presenting each type of experience. Once the scale has been developed, with values assigned each type of experience, the addition of the new types of experience offered in subsequent examination programs becomes a fairly simple matter. The technique has the disadvantage of being cumbersome and time-consuming. However, the methods which consume less time have results which are correspondingly less valid.

Still another working hypothesis is that experience which is progressive is more valuable than the same amount of experience on the same job or in jobs of decreasing responsibility. Thus, two people may each have three years of experience—one as junior visitor, one as senior visitor and one as case work supervisor. The one who began as visitor and worked up to case work supervisor is a far better risk than the individual whose initial employment was as case work supervisor and whose subsequent positions have been progressively less responsible. Any system of rating should reflect a difference between the two.

It is generally accepted that recent experience is more valuable than remote experience. This has the corollary that experience gained more than a certain number of years ago, without intervening pertinent experience, is of no value.[2] This hypothesis gains its force from the fact that individuals forget skills unless they continue to use them. A person whose latest experience in the field of social work was 10 or 20 years ago no longer possesses the skills which he had at the time that experience was fresh in his memory. Moreover, in certain fields practices are changing so that the individual whose latest experience in the field was gained 20 years ago has probably not acquired those skills and knowledges which are today considered important.

It might also be proposed as an hypothesis that education should be credited on the basis of its recency. Application of this hypothesis to actual rating would, however, so seriously penalize the older applicants whose education was gained a number of years ago as to constitute highly questionable practice. Moreover, the character of the school curriculum does not change with such rapidity as to warrant the conclusion that a bachelor's degree gained in 1910 is less valuable than a bachelor's degree gained in 1940. In the area of graduate work in certain specialties the situation may, of course, be different, although the public relations problem involved in penalizing or disqualifying candidates beyond a certain age still remains.

There is general agreement that more responsible experience is more predictive of success than less responsible experience; this assumes, of course, that the previous job is not significantly more responsible than the position for which application is made. For a routine operating job which carries little or no responsibility, an individual who has carried broad administrative responsibility for a large program may not be a good risk. Even though such an individual might possess the necessary skills and abilities (this is not necessarily true), his dissatis-

[2] If the intervening experience is in the same field, then the more remote experience might receive no credit under the hypothesis of a maximum amount of experience beyond which there is no presumed increase in competence.

faction with the routine character of the new duties would probably result in an unsatisfactory job performance.

Rating Experience for Supervisory and Administrative Positions

In rating experience for the entering level of supervisory or administrative positions, special problems are raised. The person being considered for the lowest level of case work supervisor cannot normally be expected to present supervisory experience. If this requirement is imposed, two questions are immediately raised: (a) where is he going to get such experience? and (b) if he has had such experience in supervisory positions, why is he interested in another job at the same level? If, on the other hand, no such requirement is imposed, we face the problems arising from the fact that experience in a nonsupervisory job often gives no indication of potentialities as a supervisor. There should be further study of the types of nonsupervisory experience which may have predictive value for supervisory positions.

Evaluating Quality of Experience

The problem of evaluating the quality of experience as distinguished from its pertinency is inevitably raised in any discussion of the rating of experience. Quality of experience or education may refer to either of two different aspects. The first is the reputation of the school or the agency in which the experience was gained. Certain schools are undoubtedly better equipped to provide the knowledges, skills, and abilities and maintain much higher standards of admission and graduation than others. Graduates of such schools are presumptively better qualified than graduates of other schools less well equipped. The same considerations apply, of course, to experience in particular agencies. Certain agencies with a reputation for excellent work, strong supervision, and a planned program of staff development are probably far more likely to provide their staff members with the skills and knowledges necessary for the performance of closely related jobs than are agencies whose reputation in this area is not so high. The second aspect of the quality of experience relates not to the quality of the school or agency, but to the quality of the individual's performance as evidenced by school grades or by service ratings.

Questions are inevitably raised as to the desirability of including either or both of these factors in any evaluation. There is general agreement that these hypotheses are most reasonable. It is reasonable to suppose that experience in a school or agency of high reputation is more predictive of success than experience in one whose quality of work is less well regarded. Similarly, the individual whose performance in either type of school or agency was exceptionally good is a better risk than the individual whose performance was mediocre or just barely acceptable. On the other hand, two apparently insurmountable obstacles present themselves in actual practice. The first is the propriety of the merit agency (or any other evaluating body) presuming to rank the quality of educational institutions beyond the separation into accredited and nonaccredited institutions given through their own accrediting associations. The same considerations apply to the ranking of employing agencies, e.g., departments of welfare. Moreover, in most fields the number of employers is so great that any such ranking or classification would be administratively impossible even if no other problems were involved.

The other and still more serious consideration is that there is no objective method of comparing the quality of individual performance in one educational institution or employment situation with that of another, granted that there are differences in quality. Not only do universities differ in their grading standards, but within a single university different administrative units differ so that the individual who graduates from school Y with a straight A average may or may not be superior in his performance to the individual who graduated from another department of the same university with an average of B. The problems involved in equating service ratings given by different employers using different systems (in many cases using no system whatever) appear insoluble.

If individuals are to be compared as to quality of performance in their previous experience or educational history, the same standard of comparison must be applied to all individuals and we must look beyond the experience record for our comparison. We are not, however, left without a measure of quality of experience. The primary interest is not in experience or education per se but rather in the knowledges and skills acquired; it is reasonable to suppose that those individuals whose performance was superior will have acquired more knowledge and greater skill. If they have not, then there is no basis for the differential weighting. If they have, the difference will be reflected in the written examination. Studies have shown that, at least for certain types of test, the rank order of the written examination is very close to class rank within a single school. When several schools from the same school system are included, however, the relationship becomes much less and may disappear entirely because of the lack of comparability among the schools.

The only practicable method of rating quality of the individual's past performance is to investigate the evidences of that past performance as it is expressed in present knowledge and skill through the use of the written examination, the

performance test and the oral interview. If the quality of previous experience is not manifest in terms of presently demonstrable knowledge or skill, then it is of little or no consequence in its prediction of future success. In any event, there appears to be no other administratively practicable method of taking quality of performance or quality of the agency or institution into account in the systematic selection process.

Rating of Experience Contrasted with Other Prediction Methods

The considerations just raised provide an appropriate introduction to another aspect of the rating of training and experience. We are concerned, as we have said before, not with the rating of training and experience as such, but with the prediction of future job success. It is a truism in prediction that each element in the prediction formula—the written examination, the oral interview, the performance test, and the evaluation of training and experience—should each make an independent contribution to the total prediction. The oral interview is valuable insofar as it measures aspects of the individual's performance not already better measured by the other components of the selection method. The same consideration applies with equal force to the rating of experience. If that rating does no more than confirm the prediction already available through the evidence of the written examination and the oral interview, it has made no contribution which would justify its inclusion in the selection process. The question would, of course, be raised as to whether our prediction should be based upon the written examination or upon the rating of training and experience. That decision is made in terms of the reliability of the estimate and in terms of administrative costs.

No one has questioned that the written examination is a far more reliable measure than is the best possible prediction based upon the rating of training and experience. There is evidence, moreover that the rating of training and experience is more rather than less expensive than the written examination, if the same quality of prediction is to be achieved. All of which leads to the conclusion that the rating of training and experience should be so arranged that it measures, not all aspects of knowledge, skill and ability, but rather only those aspects of the individual's presumptive job competence not already measured more economically and more reliably by the other components of the total selection process. It is primarily useful as an auxiliary selection tool.

Other Problems in Rating Experience

The discussion thus far has been in terms of general principles and general hypotheses which might be given specific application to the rating of training and experience for a particular job. It should be emphasized that acceptance of any or all of these hypotheses as a working basis is merely the beginning of our task of rating. There remain the tasks of deciding for each particular type of work precisely what is the minimum education and experience required and of determining the basis on which education may be substituted for experience. Is the most pertinent education worth the same as, or more, or less than the most pertinent type of experience? For this particular type of job, what is the maximum education or the maximum of experience beyond which no increase is likely to result in an increased probability of success? Considering all of the types of experience which might be offered by prospective candidates for the particular job in a particular agency, how should these types of experience be classified as to degree of pertinence? How many degrees should there be? What credits should be given for each level of pertinence? How shall the credits be adjusted to assure that progressive experience receives greater credit than experience which was not progressive? How recent must experience have been to be credited at all? How shall the weight to be assigned each individual year of experience in a particular type of work be adjusted so that the most recent experience receives the greatest credit? How shall the more recent, but less pertinent experience be related to more pertinent, but less recent experience? What shall be done with such special problems as the question of crediting part-time or volunteer experience or education gained outside the normal course of academic institutions in correspondence schools, business colleges or schools which are not accredited? Shall we grant credit for the possession of a college degree in addition to that earned for years of training? (The individual who attended college for 4 years and did not get a bachelor's degree may have failed to get the degree because his work was inferior in quality or because his inability to swim the length of the pool prevented his passing Physical Education I.)

These and a number of other specific and troublesome questions must be answered before the evaluation of training and experience for a particular type of job in a particular agency can proceed—even on the basis of the working hypotheses which have been outlined above. After they have been answered and experience evaluated on the basis of these hypotheses, there remains a possibility that little or no independent contribution to the prediction of job success is made by such evaluation. The hypotheses, however reasonable they may appear, may very well not be substantiated by actual facts. Almost certainly the weights assigned to varying levels of pertinency by a judgmental process are not the weights which would result in the most effective prediction and very conceivably might result in predictions which run contrary to the facts. For

example, if we assume that because pertinent experience is good, more of the same experience is better, we might continue crediting experience so that the individual with the greatest number of years of experience will receive the greatest credit. But, on the other hand, an individual whose rate of promotion in his professional field has been extremely rapid so that he is eligible for consideration for an advanced job with a small number of years of experience behind him is a better risk than the individual whose rate of promotion was such that it took him 20 years to become eligible for the same position. The plausible hypothesis of the more experience the greater the credit leads us to an improbable result. How many of the hypotheses described are equally naive cannot be said until they have been tested in the light of factual information.

In summary, experience is of value not in itself but as evidence of knowledge and abilities from which to predict success. A number of working hypotheses have been examined; each one, though plausible, needs verification. It clearly appears that, however refined the rating process, the inadequacies of the applicant's record of experience impose severe limits on the accuracy of prediction; careful rating is useful primarily as an auxiliary selection device rather than as the principal basis of selection.

The Evaluation of Techniques in Placement in the Army

Prepared by the Staff, Personnel Research Section, Classification & Replacement Branch, The Adjutant General's Office, War Department *

TODAY I am speaking on "The Evaluation of Test Techniques in Placement in the Army." Before telling you how the Army uses tests, I want to tell you a little about Army placement. In the Army, placement is called classification and assignment. Classification is the process by which the Army finds out what it needs to know about a man in order to use him most efficiently. Assignment is the process by which the Army places him in the job he can do.

Classification Procedures

Classification begins at the induction station. There the Army eliminates not only men who are medically unfit but also those who show no promise of being able to learn the duties of a soldier. This second task is partially accomplished by checking the educational records of the men being examined and then thoroughly testing for possession of basic capacities, by means of both group and individual tests, all dubious cases.

After induction comes the reception center, where classification processes reveal each man's civilian background and his Army potentialities—age, physical status, height and weight, education, complete job experience, hobbies, previous military experience, interests, abilities, and aptitudes. To assist in the classification, tests are used to check trade knowledge, to determine the general level of mental ability, to investigate possibilities for learning new jobs. All this information is then used to decide what job each man can best perform in view of the needs of the Army. After this initial classification has been made, the man is assigned to a branch of the Army requiring men with his qualifications. Two factors are considered in making the first assignment—the civilian occupational specialty in which the man has been classified and the Army's occupational requirements as the reception center knows them at the particular time.

From the reception center, the soldier goes to the training center or field unit of the branch to which he has been assigned, where he receives basic military and technical training as an individual. Here, his classification is checked, so that he may be properly assigned for training in a particular military occupation. Some men may have to be discharged for inaptitude; more testing is often needed in this check-up. After basic training has been completed, men are selected to attend specialist schools. Often test performance is an important factor in deciding who should go to school.

Classification continues after the man is assigned to the unit in which he will serve. Soldiers may be reclassified if they have learned new military specialties. Promotions, selections for special jobs, reclassifications, and procurement and assignment of replacements are all facilitated, both here and overseas, by the information the classification system provides.

* Read by Lt. Col. Marion W. Richardson, Chief, Personnel Research.

Finally, when the soldier is ready for discharge, the Army offers him vocational guidance to help him in his postwar readjustment. Thus, from induction to discharge, Army classification is important, and personnel tests are a vital part of the system.

Tests and similar procedures can be valuable to the Army classification system only insofar as they are carefully built and used. To be efficient, personnel techniques must be devised and carried out by selected and trained personnel. Untrained personnel cannot do the job. By trained personnel, I mean individuals with a broad background in the theory and practice of applied psychology and with actual experience in constructing, trying out, and using tests. Merely having given hundreds or thousands of tests does not give anyone such a background; the expert is one who has an appreciation of the problem as a whole: Why is a test needed? How should it be planned? What are the appropriate groups and the proper methods for trying out the test? What factors will influence its use? What are the best, the most modern, ways of solving these problems?

The organization in the War Department which I represent, the Personnel Research Section of The Adjutant General's Office, is charged with "the development, construction, validation, and standardization of personnel screening tests and interview techniques for the Army." Of its staff of about 125 civilians and officers, over 60 are directly engaged in test construction and were selected for their training and experience in that field. What this means is that the preparation of tests for the Army is in the hands of one centralized, expert organization. By now this section has had considerable experience in the problems of military test construction—its work began in 1940 with the Army General Classification Test, of which I am sure all of you have heard.

Test Construction in the Army

How does the Personnel Research Section go about building a test for the Army? The first requisite is the recognition of a problem to whose solution tests can contribute. Obviously, when military quotas *must* be filled, the exigencies of the situation may not permit the placement of all individual soldiers according to their abilities. When experienced men are placed directly in jobs they know, there is no problem other than checking their experience. But if assignment must be made in terms of aptitudes for learning new jobs, then tests can make a valuable contribution.

The next step is to define the specific purpose which the test can serve. Every Army test is built to supply needed information which can be obtained most easily and quickly by testing techniques. The purposes are *Army* purposes; the groups with which the test is used are *military* groups. Men are measured under definite, stated conditions for definite, stated reasons. The Army is not interested in whether or not a test is an achievement or an aptitude test—artificial distinctions of this kind are of no importance—what the Army wants to know is "Does the test tell us what we need to know? Does it help us classify men more accurately? Does it save us money, material, or training time or facilities which would otherwise be wasted by putting the wrong man in a job or by attempting to train men who cannot learn?"

While the maximum efficiency of the Army is of concern to all of us as citizens, this orientation of Army tests is of direct interest to you as social workers. On many occasions you are called upon to deal with test results, and many of you have been asking what these Army test results will mean to you in dealing with discharged soldiers. The answer is that the scores on these tests have meaning, at present, in terms of the military situation for which they were designed and that their meaning for specific civilian situations is not known.

The tests to be constructed for the vocational guidance of the soldiers being discharged will be an exception to this rule. These tests will, of course, have a civilian rather than a military orientation.

Trying Out Experimental Tests

After the specific purpose for a test has been defined, the type of instrument and the content are determined. Experimental tests are written or built and then tried out. They are tried out on soldiers representative of those for whom the tests are intended at installations of the sort where the tests will finally be used. At the same time, information is gathered about the men tested so that a measure of the performance to be predicted is available. The data are then subjected to statistical analysis, the best questions are chosen, and from them the final tests are made. These tests are tried out on representative groups of soldiers, this time to establish a scale of comparable scores or to set a qualifying score. Then, and only then, are they released for routine use.

To take a typical example, it was decided that it was necessary to reject men before induction who had so little chance of acquiring the minimum military knowledge and skills that it is not practical for the Army to train them. A large battery of tests was devised and tried out on soldiers whose general level of ability was known to be low. The noncommissioned and commissioned officers in daily contact with these soldiers in training rated the men on their performance, that

is, indicated whether they were the kind of soldiers the officers would like to have with them in combat, whether they contributed to or detracted from the efficiency of the unit. After statistical analysis, a group of tests of the following sort were found to predict low efficiency as a soldier: First, a short, written, group test of ability to understand paragraphs, to work problems in arithmetic, and to follow directions. Second, for men who failed this test, a group performance test of ability to follow directions and to orient oneself in space. Third, for men who failed the second screen, an individual performance examination. On the basis of the tests results, men are rejected, accepted, or accepted with the knowledge that they will require special training before they can undertake regular Army training. Relatively little time at the induction station is spent in testing men whose abilities are found to be adequate, while men who are potential hindrances to Army efficiency are thoroughly tested before a decision is made. When the program was released for use, all the tests had been thoroughly proved and the necessary qualifying scores had been established.

Administering the Test

No matter how carefully a test has been developed, it is of no value unless it is properly used. Here again, the trained personnel psychologist is needed. In an organization of the size of the Army of the United States, not all the officers and the enlisted men working in classification can be experts. A great many of them are. But, experienced personnel must provide the directions for using a test—how to give it and how to score it—in such a way that both trained and untrained classification workers can give the test and obtain fair scores. It is a question not only of insuring that all examiners administer tests under standard conditions but also of giving directions that can be followed easily.

Even more important than the provision of directions is the establishment of test standards and norms that classification personnel can use easily and correctly and that are meaningful in terms of the problems at hand. If a test score remains only a number on a soldier's record, it does not function, and the test counts for nothing.

Interpretation of Test Results

Two steps must be taken if test scores are to be of value. One is to express the results of test in understandable terms. These terms should have the same meaning for all men and for all tests, so that a classification officer glancing at a score can know instantly whether the man is good, average, or poor in respect to what the test measures. The other step is to set qualifying scores for particular jobs or training assignments and to give information about the values of the test in various situations, together with suggestions to the classification officer telling him how he can use the scores in his local situation.

To express test results in comprehensible, meaningful terms the Army has developed a system of standard scores and Army grades. The standard scores measure each man's *exact* standing in his group, while the Army grades, which are based on the standard scores, provide broad groupings. Scores on the tests authorized for general use are always expressed in both of these ways.

How are these scores and grades obtained? When a test is ready for use, it is first tried out, as I indicated earlier, on groups of soldiers representative of those with whom the test will ultimately be used. The scores made by these men are converted statistically to the scale of standard scores. On this scale, a score of 100 has been chosen to represent average Army performance. The measure of variability, that is, the standard deviation, has been set at 20. It is immediately apparent from a soldier's standard score how he compares with representative Army men in that ability or aptitude.

Standard Scores

A few examples of the meaning of standard scores may be helpful. A score of 100 on the Army General Classification Test means average performance on this Army-wide test of general mental level. In other words, the soldier with this score has average mental ability as compared with the other men in the Army. A score of 100 on the Mechanical Aptitude Test represents average aptitude for learning mechanical tasks. Approximately 50 per cent of the soldiers have more mechanical aptitude, and 50 per cent less mechanical aptitude, than a man with this score. Now, let us suppose that a soldier has a standard score of 120 on the Army General Classification Test. This score means that he is above the Army average in mental ability; to be precise, he is one standard deviation above average and does better than 84 per cent of the men in the Army. Now let us take a man whose aptitude for learning mechanical tasks is far below average. This fact is reflected by his standard score of, say, 70 on the Mechanical Aptitude Test, which means that 93 per cent of soldiers have more aptitude for mechanical training that he has.

Not only are all scores expressed in common terms by the method of standard scores, but they also have a common point of reference. That point of reference is the average performance of the group for whom the test is intended. The Army is not interested in what the average American man can do—the Army is interested in what the men in the Army can do. Neverthe-

less, while these scores tell the Army what to expect from its men, there is no way of knowing how representative these soldiers are of men in general. Even with a test like the Army General Classification Test, which eight million men have taken, it is dangerous to generalize from the performance of soldiers to that of all American men. Men have been inducted predominantly from certain age groups, and in these age groups, men have been deferred for occupational, family, and physical reasons.

While the standard score is used when precise prediction and placement are necessary, often the problem requires only that men be sorted into a few broad categories. For example, no one company should have men whose general level of ability is either exceptionally high or exceptionally low. For such purposes the Army grade is useful. There are five Army grades, ranging from I, the highest, to V, the lowest. Most men are in Army grade III, which represents average performance.

There appears to be a misapprehension on the part of many people about what kind of scores these standard scores and Army grades are. All of you, no doubt, have heard people call them IQ scores or, on the other hand, say that Army tests are not psychometric tests because they do not yield an MA and an IQ. Both of these views are quite false. The scores on Army tests are not IQ's; the two types of scores have nothing in common. It is a mere coincidence that for both of them average performance is equal to 100. Army tests *are* psychometric tests; they are measuring devices carefully constructed to indicate what men can be expected to do in certain situations.

Whatever may be the arguments for using the IQ and the MA with children, such concepts have no place in Army testing. Since no one knows with any certainty when mental growth stops, any age devisor selected for adults is purely arbitrary and leads to such unfortunate statements as the one made during the last war that the average soldier had a mental age of thirteen. The Army is not interested in theoretical problems of mental growth; it is not interested in making absurd comparisons between the mental performance of children and of adults. It *is* interested in a means of measurement which compares each man in the Army to every other man in the Army. The system of standard scores which I have just described does this.

How the Army Classification Officer Uses Tests

We have reached the point at which the classification officer has been provided with tests which yield scores whose meaning is easy to grasp. How may he make use of these tests? On occasion, he has relatively little freedom. He may be told, for example, that a minimum score of 110 on the Army General Classification Test must be met by all officer candidates. In that case, he cannot recommend anyone for Officer Candidate School who does not meet that qualifying score.

On other occasions, he may be faced with a local problem which he himself must solve. Suppose, for example, that a relatively large portion of the men sent to an auto mechanics school have had civilian experience as auto mechanics but do not have enough knowledge of the field to be directly assigned as specialists. If the background of many of these men is sufficient, a large amount of time and money could be saved by omitting a part of the course and concentrating on those aspects of the specialty about which they lack knowledge. In such a case, the officer may request assistance from the Personnel Research Section. The section will inform him what tests were constructed for solving such problems in other installations, whether they would be adaptable to his problem, and what the probable effect would be of using these instruments with various qualifying scores. The classification officer may then decide whether the use of such instruments would be of value in his local situation, and, if so, obtain authorization for their use in connection with his problem.

Test information is always used together with all other information available about the man and the situation. Tests are never to be thought of as the sole, the determining factor. Past civilian experience, past Army training, expressed interests, hobbies, special abilities, the military situation—everything that can have any bearing on the situation is taken into account.

However, all information relating to various phases of the individual's personality, background, and capacities is handled as objectively as possible. Thus, the significance of previous experience as a predictor of success in a given job is tested by finding out whether such experience is actually related to success on that job. This is done by statistical analysis of the records of a large number of persons placed on such jobs.

The Oral Examination

The same type of scrutiny has been applied to the interview or oral examination. In personnel work, generally, the interview has been used as a basic tool for determining personnel actions without any knowledge as to how the tool actually worked. Rarely has anyone found out whether there is any relationship between the information and judgments derived from the interview and subsequent performance on the job. This is true not only of the unplanned, hit-or-miss type of interview, but also of the well-conducted systematic interview.

The Personnel Research Section has conducted investigations of the interview with a view to

finding out what can and what cannot be accomplished. In a study of officer selection, the interview was limited to the single purpose of evaluating the ability of the interviewee to get along with people. It was specified that the five members of the interviewing board should not know the interviewee personally, and that no written materials or test scores (personnel records) should be available to them. A set of questions to be asked the applicant together with a written set of instructions as to what elements of behavior were to be observed was provided. Each examiner unobtrusively checked the observed behavior of the interviewee according to a set schedule. Finally, each examiner independently made a summary judgment of the ability of the officer to get along with people. The results were then summarized, and a composite rating in one of five categories was made. It was found that the results of such an interview were much more reliable than the results of the traditional interview and, further, that the interview was a good indication of success as an officer.

It is evident that, if interviews or oral examinations are limited to a single purpose and are carefully validated, they can serve as a valid selection tool. However, a good general policy to follow is not to use oral examinations or interviews if there exist properly validated objective methods; the interview may be only an inferior approximation to more exact methods and it is almost always more expensive and time-consuming.

Application to Social Work

All of the principles (but not necessarily the same devices) used in Army selection, promotion, and placement are useful in occupations such as social service work. However, research results cannot be taken over without a recheck for each new occupational group.

If we want to make a summary evaluation of test techniques in Army placement, we can say first, that in an Army as large as ours, efficient classification and assignment is a vital necessity. The Army has found that tests constructed with the Army's purposes in view are an integral part of such a system. Useful tests are the product of careful construction and careful use, jobs for trained experts. We may say, then, that tests are making a definite contribution to Army placement insofar as they are wisely used.

NASHVILLE SCHOOL

(Continued from p. 17)

used the local office of the Tennessee Department of Public Welfare, Nashville Chapter of the American Red Cross, Nashville Children's Bureau, and the Visiting Teacher Division of the Nashville Public Schools. One year we used a nearby rural office of the Tennessee Department of Public Welfare as a rural child welfare training center. We have received funds recently from the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis for the establishment of the medical social specialization. The practice center for medical social work will be located in the Vanderbilt University Hospital.

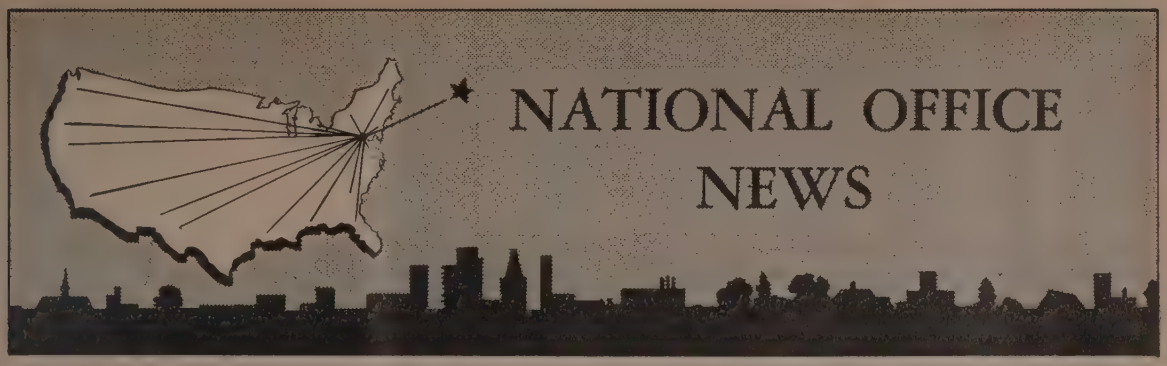
From the outset, the Nashville School of Social Work has had an ample travel budget and a strong recruitment program. Fourteen states and thirty colleges have been visited regularly, field trips being made at six month intervals by members of the faculty. Public and private social agencies have welcomed visits from the school. By frequent contacts with resource people on college campuses it has been possible to find students who have good intellectual ability and strong aptitudes for the profession.

The School—Integral Part of Three Educational Institutions

Before closing this paper, it seems desirable to answer one question not raised in the beginning. Frequently we are asked by letter and by personal inquiry how three educational institutions can work together cooperatively. The Nashville University Center is a working fact. The Nashville School of Social Work and the Joint University Libraries are actually operated by these three institutions. The three institutions share responsibility for many educational programs and projects. The success of the Center is built upon one word, "Cooperation."

With reference to the Nashville School of Social Work in particular, Scarritt College furnishes the building in which the School is housed, Peabody College furnishes dormitory space in its Graduate Dormitory and Vanderbilt University awards the degree and handles funds for the school. Faculty members of the Nashville School of Social Work are members of the faculty of Vanderbilt University. Vanderbilt University has made extensive financial contributions to the school. A second grant has been received from the General Education Board in the amount of $30,000. Numerous scholarships and loan funds have been made available to the school.

The story of the Nashville School of Social Work will be written during the years to come. As we pause to review the past three years it is with a sense of gratitude to administrators of the three schools, professional workers, students who risked their lot with a pioneering group, and faculty who felt this same challenge. The help given by the American Association of Schools of Social Work continues to be a source of real strength as one of its newest members charts a course for the future.



National Board Meets

The first meeting of the AASW National Board in the 1945–46 program year was held in New York City on November 7, 8 and 9. The meeting was well attended—17 out of 21 officers and Board members were present, and 7 out of 10 national committee chairmen. The National Board reviewed committee activities since its last meeting in March 1945 and outlined plans for the remainder of this program year.

Election of Executive Committee

Members of the Executive Committee elected by the Board for 1945–46 are: Mrs. Irene F. Conrad, President; Miss Harriett Bartlett, 1st Vice-President; Mr. Earl Parker, Treasurer; Miss Helen Hubbell, Mr. Clarence Pretzer and Mr. John Charnow, who served on the committee last year, and Mr. Alton Linford.

Vacancies on National Nominating Committee

Two members of the National Nominating Committee, elected in 1945, have had to resign because they have moved to other areas. They are Miss Eda Houwink, representing District 2 and Miss Norma Philbrick, representing District 7. In accordance with bylaw provisions, the National Board elected Mr. Campbell Loughmiller to replace Miss Houwink and Miss Mildred Sweet to replace Miss Philbrick.

1946 Delegate Conference

The Board authorized the calling of a Delegate Conference to be held on May 17, 18 and 19, 1946, in Buffalo, New York. Final action on the agenda for the conference will be taken at the spring meeting of the Board although some material on proposals which were acted upon at this meeting will be sent to chapters soon.

25th Anniversary Celebration

Plans were formulated for commemoration of the Association's 25th anniversary during 1946. A preliminary report of a special committee on the 25th anniversary under the chairmanship of Dr. Arlien Johnson included the following recommendations: (1) That arrangements be made for an anniversary dinner to be held at the time of the Delegate Conference; (2) that a special anniversary issue of THE COMPASS be published next spring; (3) that plans be developed for the guidance of chapters in observing the Association's 25th anniversary in their own communities.

Proposals for Bylaw Changes

A report from a special committee of the Board on bylaw revisions, under the chairmanship of Dr. Herbert Williams, was adopted by the Board and recommendations for changes in the Association's bylaws will be presented at the Delegate Conference. Major changes deal with two-year terms of office for officers of the Association and advancing the dates for the beginning of the program year from October 1 to July 1.

Committee on Organization and Planning

Platform statements prepared by the subcommittees on Medical Care and Housing were submitted by the Committee on Organization and Planning for review and final action by the Board, and it was decided that the proposed statements be included on the agenda for the Delegate Conference. Upon the request of the Washington, D. C., Chapter, the National Board authorized the establishment of a committee to prepare platform statement material in the area of child welfare services, to be submitted to the Board in the spring.

Personnel Practices Report

In the absence of Mrs. Florence Hosch, chairman, the following report was given: The Draft Statement on Personnel Practices will be reviewed by the committee at a meeting in February in the light of suggested changes which have been made by chapters and individual Association members. The statement will be presented at the spring meeting of the National Board with the recommendation that it be submitted for Delegate Con-

ference action. Plans of the committee include a meeting with representatives of national functional agencies to discuss trends in social work salaries. An effort will also be made to obtain financing for a comprehensive study of salaries in the social work field.

Registration and Licensing of Social Workers

Mrs. Lucille Smith, chairman, reviewed activities of the committee during the past six months and presented recommendations that the Association establish a standing committee on Registration and Licensing of Social Workers which would be concerned with the following four phases of the subject: (1) a definition of social work; (2) a census of social workers; (3) types of regulation and accrediting; (4) the role of the AASW. The Board approved the recommendations.

International Organization for Social Work

The Committee on International Organization for Social Work was established following the July meeting of the Executive Committee. Mr. Morris Zelditch, chairman of the committee, reported on two requests which had come to the committee. The first was a suggestion that the Association participate in a project to evaluate the work of UNRRA. This request was rejected because the committee felt that it was not appropriate for the Association to undertake such a study. The second request came from a representative of the War Department and was for assistance in organizing a committee of social workers to assist the Military Government in Germany in dealing with its social welfare problems. A list of names was prepared and made available to the War Department.

Major attention is being given by the committee to current developments leading toward the establishment of an international welfare organization under the United Nations Organization. Mr. Zelditch and Mr. Anderson have participated in meetings with representatives of other public and private organizations, at which time proposals outlining function, purpose and structure of the proposed international welfare organzation were discussed. Plans are being formulated to submit this statement to a larger group of social agency representatives, following which a recommendation will be sent to the State Department of the United States. Members of the Board reported on other developments in this area and requested the committee to give attention to methods by which the Association could be helpful to students and other officials from foreign countries who wish to become acquainted with the social work structure in the United States.

Committee on Research and Statistics

A report on the first meeting of the newly established Committee on Research and Statistics in Social Work was presented by its chairman, Miss Anne Geddes. Plans were formulated by the committee for tabulation of the information gathered from the questionnaires sent to Association members during the past year. It is expected that this material will be available shortly after the first of the year. There was some discussion regarding the relation of the Research Committee to subject matter committees of the Association and plans for developing a liaison between the Research Committee and other Association committees are under consideration.

National Examining Unit

Considerations related to the establishment of a national examining unit for the social work field which had been reviewed by the Civil Service Subcommittee were outlined to the National Board by the committee chairman, Miss Alice Padgett. The committee plans to have further discussion in this area, giving special emphasis to study of the experience of other professional groups and to ways of presenting information on this subject to social workers.

Committee on Publications

A statement outlining the editorial policy for THE COMPASS which had been revised since the March Board meeting was presented to the Board by Mr. Russell Kurtz, chairman of the Committee on Publications. Copies of the statement are available from the national office on request. Discussion of future plans for THE COMPASS revealed that material for publication was now being received in sufficient quantity so that more emphasis could be given to selection of appropriate articles. It is now possible also to give more time to the format and general appearance of THE COMPASS.

Public Social Policies

In the absence of the chairman, Mr. Thomas J. Waxter, Mr. Anderson reported for the Committee on Public Social Policies. He reviewed the activities of the committee in connection with legislation on social security and full employment. In order to clarify some of the issues raised by the introduction of legislation directed toward the expansion of child welfare services, a joint meeting of representatives of the AASW, APWA and Child Welfare League, to which federal officials were invited, was held on November 12.

Mr. Maslen, chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing, reported to the Board on a recent meeting held in Washington to discuss housing legislation. Plans are being formulated for a program designed to mobilize support of all organizations interested in housing legislation.

Services to Youth

The Board was also informed about a joint conference called on the initiative of the AASW with representatives of the Association for the Study of Group Work and the Associated Youth Serving Organizations, at which the need for a legislative program in the area of services to youth was discussed. Mr. Robert Taber, chairman of the Committee on Organization and Planning, presided at the conference. Following this meeting a conference was arranged with National Education Association officials to discuss the possibility of developing a cooperative program of action. Plans are also being made for a meeting with officials of federal agencies who are represented on a committee to consider problems of youth in the reconversion period.

Relationship Between Voluntary and Public Agencies

The Board considered again the resolution urging Association study of the relationship between public and voluntary social work agencies, introduced by Miss Dorothy C. Kahn and adopted at the 1944 Delegate Conference. In view of the current program responsibilities the Board took action to invite four chapters in various sections of the country to undertake preliminary study of this topic. The staff was requested to prepare a preliminary statement to be submitted to chapters as a basis for study.

Professional Education for Social Work

In reporting on the concern of the Committee on Education for Social Work, of which Mr. A. A. Heckman is chairman, Mrs. Eleanor Cranefield, a member of the committee, stated that the committee has started work on three projects. The first is designed to develop better understanding on the part of members of the profession regarding desirable standards for social work education. Material on this subject is being prepared by Miss Leona Massoth of the American Association of Schools of Social Work and a group of articles on this subject written especially for publication in THE COMPASS. The second project is the development of a statement which can be used as a guide by chapters interested in developing resources for social work education in their communities. The third is intended to further the objective of getting more students to complete their professional graduate education in the schools of social work. As a first step in working toward this objective, the committee is planning a meeting with representatives of national functional agencies at which time a full discussion of all factors related to this question will be discussed.

Committee on Group Work

Miss Gertrude Wilson, chairman of the Committee on Group Work, reported that the committee had one meeting at which time it outlined the areas of interest to professional group workers, reviewed provisions which have been made in Association program for participation of group workers in these areas, and selected two areas for intensive work by the committee. The committee is also giving attention to the development of ways through which group workers within the AASW can have a better understanding of the total program of the Association and means through which wider participation of group workers in chapter activities can be achieved.

At a meeting of the committee held in Cleveland on November 16 and 17 preliminary work was started on the professional content of social group work. A report about this meeting has been presented in a special bulletin to chapters.

Wartime Committee on Personnel

Miss Grace White, chairman of the Wartime Committee on Personnel, reported on significant developments regarding the work of the committee in relation to the Civil Service Commission and the Veterans Administration. A conference with Mr. Arthur Flemming, a member of the United States Civil Service Commission, was arranged for November 30. In addition to members of the Wartime Committee, Civil Service Committee members were present and had an opportunity to discuss questions related to the personnel standards, selection of personnel through the examination process, and recruiting of eligible candidates for positions under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Commission is giving assistance to the Wartime Committee on Personnel in its work on arrangements for a meeting with representatives of federal agencies employing social work personnel, which is scheduled for a later date.

There have been many developments in the Veterans Administration during the past several months. Following a conference between Mrs. Elizabeth Ross, Mr. Anderson and General Paul R. Hawley, Acting Surgeon General, the Wartime Committee on Personnel submitted a statement which outlined in detail suggestions for strengthening the social work structure in the Veterans Administration program.

Miss White reported also that the newsletter to the men in the armed forces, which has been published during the last year, has been received most favorably.

National Membership Committee

The National Membership Committee which is composed of members of the Board, with Alton Linford as chairman, reviewed administrative problems brought to its attention by the staff and gave general consideration to membership trends. Reports on membership reveal that for the first nine months of this year there has been a net gain in the membership of approximately 400.

Committee on Chapters

Miss Cordelia Cox, chairman of the Committee on Chapters, recommended that Board approval be given to the requests of the Omaha group of the Nebraska State Chapter and the Olympia group of the Olympic Chapter (Washington) to establish separate chapters. The Board approved this recommendation. Miss Cox called attention to the Handbook for Chapters which had been developed and distributed and to the institute for officers and committee chairmen which was held in New England. The Committee on Chapters is giving further attention to ways in which the Association can serve non-chapter members and plans that are being made to extend chapter jurisdiction so that all Association members can be included in chapters.

Discussion of the Board brought out the point that the AASW monthly bulletin, *Notes to Chapters,* could be used in a variety of ways by chapters and was one way through which chapter-national relationships could be strengthened. It was suggested that more copies of *Notes to Chapters* be made available to chapters for use by committee chairmen.

Association Financial Statement and 1946 Budget

Mr. Earl Parker, the Treasurer, presented a report on income and expenditures for the period ending October 31, 1945. Estimates of income and expenditures for the last three months of the year, which had been prepared by the staff, indicated that the Association would end the year with a larger balance than had been anticipated. The budget for the year 1946 was presented for consideration by the Board. Personnel turnover in the national office made it inadvisable to attempt an accurate forecast of the amount of the salary item for the coming year. A study of some of the office operations, particularly those related to the collection of dues and refunds to chapters, is being undertaken and final decision on this item in the Association budget will not be made until after the study is completed. The budget estimates for the other items remain approximately the same as they were in the year 1945. The Board authorized increases in salaries for professional staff and an expenditure of $1,000 to cover the cost of tabulating the results from the membership census and costs which may be incurred in connection with the observance of the Association's 25th Anniversary.

Evaluation of Executive Secretary

In keeping with the operating policies of the Association a committee to evaluate the work of the Executive Secretary, composed of Miss Rittenhouse, Mr. Benjamin and Mr. Pretzer, chairman, presented a report on its findings. The report of the committee was based on material submitted by former and present officers of the Association, chairman of committees with whom Mr. Anderson had worked, and some chapters which he had visited. The report was approved by the Board.

1946 Delegate Conference Called

The National Board has decided to call a Delegate Conference of the American Association of Social Workers for Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 17, 18 and 19, 1946, in Buffalo, immediately preceding the National Conference of Social Work. This will be an especially important conference since the Association was not able to have a Delegate Conference in 1945. It will give the membership an opportunity to review the current program and discuss future plans for Association activities. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the AASW will also be celebrated at the conference. A special committee of the National Board under the chairmanship of Dr. Arlien Johnson of Los Angeles is planning, among other things, to have an anniversary dinner on the Saturday night during the Delegate Conference.

A special bulletin is being sent to chapter chairmen regarding program plans and the membership as a whole will be kept informed through issues of THE COMPASS as to proposals which will be submitted for discussion and action by the delegates.

Requests for hotel reservations in Buffalo should be sent to Mr. A. J. Morgan, Manager, National Conference of Social Work Housing Bureau, Convention and Tourist Bureau, 602 Genesee Building, Buffalo, New York.

Washington, D. C.

The Chapter Studies Confidentiality

CONTINUITY of chapter activities in one area of professional standards and principles is being achieved in the district of Columbia Chapter. Four years work of the Committee on Records, which has culminated in the publication of a statement *Principles of Confidentiality in Social Work*,[1] is providing the basis for the current work of the Committee on Confidentiality.

IN THE PAST

Subject Matter

In the fall of 1941 the Committee on Records was given responsibility for "formulating social work principles applicable to the protection of client and community in use of case work material." Work on this assignment included obtaining information about current practice as well as reviewing pertinent social work literature.[2] It was apparent that there was wide variation in theory and practice and that the concept of confidentiality in social work had not been thoroughly explored. To clarify this aspect of professional ethics the committee undertook to analyze in detail such questions as: What is the nature of the obligation to confidentiality and what is the right to which the obligation corresponds? When is the client's right to confidentiality superseded by other rights? Does the obligation extend only to the use or disclosure of information after it has been obtained? Does it establish limits within which information may be sought? Does it restrict the disclosure of information within an agency? For example may a worker ever promise a client that information given will be disclosed to no one else? Does restriction on disclosure outside the agency require that the client's consent be obtained to all outside contacts? If so, is consent necessary for registration with a central index? Does the obligation have implication for the maintenance and use of records?

Seeking the answers to these and other questions resulted in the development of the above monograph in which the nature and scope of the social work obligation to confidentiality is considered and four principles to carry it out are suggested. Each of the suggested principles is elaborated upon under three headings—Discussion, Exceptions, and Administrative Implications—in the complete statement. A copy of the preview page from the statement follows:

> Clients have a right to protection of personal information about themselves in their relationship with a social agency during and following the process of obtaining service, a right which may be superseded in exceptional situations. Recognition of this right requires adherence to the following principles:
>
> I. The client should be used as the primary source of information about himself, and information sought from him should

Each month this department carries a description of an interesting project developed by one of our chapters. This month's contribution comes from the Washington, D. C., Chapter, which has a membership of 512 and employs a half time professional executive secretary. The Washington Chapter is a very active one and often shares with the National Office the responsibility for interpreting the profession to Congress and other national organizations. Mrs. Frances Simsarian is Chapter Chairman.

[1] Available from National Office or Mrs. Nellie Bain, Administrative Secretary, D. C. Chapter AASW, 2806 31 St., S.E., Apt. B689, Washington 20, D. C., at 25¢ each.

[2] A "Digest of References Relating to the Confidentiality of the Social Agency-Client Relationship" was completed in Feb. 1942. (A copy is available on loan from the District of Columbia Chapter.) Additional references published later were also reviewed.

be limited to that which is essential to provide service.

II. Within the agency information regarding a client should be revealed only to those persons and to the extent necessary to provide service.

III. Other agencies and individuals should be consulted only with the client's consent and within the limits of that consent.

IV. Only that information should be recorded and those records maintained that are essential to provide service and the use of records should be determined by agency function and the consent of the client.

Committee Organization and Process

Simplicity characterized committee organization and procedures. Although a few chapter members were initially invited to serve on the committee (to insure having a committee), many were recruited through an open invitation to chapter members. A total of 18 members served on the committee. Desirable continuity of service by several persons was supplemented by stimulation from new members who joined the group in the second and third years of the committee's activity. An initial decision to have detailed study by subcommittees working consecutively was abandoned after the group heard the provocative report of the discussions of one subcommittee.

The group functioned as a study group, its meetings all being devoted to discussion. After having each member describe the practices followed in her agency in disclosing information, and having a staff member of the Social Security Board tell about that agency's standards for safeguarding public assistance information, the group spent the major part of the first year and part of the second in discussing basic concepts. During this time the point of view of individual members and of the group as a whole underwent considerable modification. Agreement was reached, however, on the fundamental approach to the development of principles.

Recognizing the need for official information about current practice an inquiry was sent to agencies in and near the District of Columbia in the spring of 1942. Preparation of a report of that inquiry, participated in by 10 public and 15 private agencies, was concluded early in the second year of the committee's work. A summary of this as well as highlights from social work literature on the subject, both given by members of the committee, and a talk on privileged communications by Mr. A. Delafield Smith, an attorney, comprised the program of the December 1942 chapter meeting. These were made available in pamphlet form to all the agencies which participated in the inquiry as well as to interested chapter members.[3]

Having clarified basic concepts the group next considered the areas about which they wished to develop principles. It was first agreed to develop these around: application and intake, during social study, while providing service, and after closing. Initial attempts to write principles on these items, based on a time classification, were not satisfying to the group and it was agreed to develop principles based on a classification of persons involved, covering contacts with the client, contacts within the agency, and contacts outside the agency, as well as a principle on the maintenance and use of records.

The writing process was planned to permit each member to make a maximum contribution to a statement that had unity in style. Each member assumed responsibility for drafting materials on certain topics. The content of these materials was subjected to critical analysis and discussion by the group. After the four principles had been covered in this way the committee selected from these materials the content they wished included in the statement. The group decided also that in drafting the statement reference should be made to the agreement with or disagreement from published materials. The chairman then prepared a complete draft of the statement. After group consideration, individual members worked intensively with the chairman on revision of this draft. Word by word review by the entire committee was the basis for the subsequent draft which was again reviewed and revised by the entire group. That revision was submitted to and approved by the Executive Committee of the chapter. However, the group wished to revise it further. Comments were solicited from ethicians, attorneys, and selected social workers. In addition, at the request of the Executive Committee, two meetings, each of which had an attendance of approximately 50, were held to obtain discussion by chapter members and representatives of local social agencies. Prior to the meetings copies of the tentative draft of the statement were made available to local agencies—those which had cooperated in the committee's inquiry in 1942, as well as others. The solicited comments and the discussion at these meetings were used in the committee's revision of the statement into its present form.

Application and Interpretation

Although the committee was a study group, newspaper articles provided stimuli to action. In one instance, feature stories were sympathetic with a board member of a social settlement who protested his inability to obtain information from the local juvenile court about the children from his neighborhood whom he knew were known to the court. The committee took this opportunity

[3] A limited number of copies are available from the District of Columbia Chapter, free.

to prepare for the signature of the chapter chariman, a letter to the editor of the paper interpreting the need for, and outlining the protection in juvenile court laws concerning the confidential nature of information. In another instance a paper reported that the Department of Recreation had requested from the Board of Education that information from the health records of school children be made available to it. The article implied that the health department, which made the examination of school children might provide the information. The committee drafted, for the chapter chairman, a letter to the Health Department, inquiring about their policy in this situation. Reports of the introduction of legislation into Congress that would require the local office of the United States Employment Service to give information about suspected persons to the Metropolitan Police Force of the District of Columbia provided another opportunity to interpret confidentiality in social work. A committee member conferred with the legislator who introduced the bill and another person concerned with the process of the bill, explaining the need for safeguarding such information in the United States Employment Service as well as in other public social services. The bill was not reported out of committee. Similar activity in response to other newspaper items involving confidentiality, although it might have been desirable, was not feasible. In addition to these activities one committee member prepared an article "Some Thoughts on Confidentiality in Social Work" for the *Catholic Charities Review*,[4] based largely on discussions of, and draft materials developed by the committee.

IN THE PRESENT AND FUTURE

In submitting to the Executive Committee the report of its fourth year of work, the Committee on Records recommended that further chapter activity be planned that would permit use of the statement "Principles of Confidentiality in Social work." It was suggested that the chapter might: continue the Committee on Records to hold additional group meetings to discuss the statement; establish a Committee on Confidentiality to explore further the ideas presented in the statement; or establish a Committee on Professional Ethics, which might use the Committee's statement as a basis for a section on relationships with the client in a code of ethics. The second of these suggestions was adopted by the Executive Committee. The chapter chairman and the chairman selected for the new committee, who had been a member of the Committee on Records, drafted the following assignment of the new committee:

> The function of this group, is, as a study group to explore current practices on safeguarding information and to develop written materials for chapter consideration. The report, "Principles of Confidentiality in Social Work," prepared by the Committee on Records of this Chapter, 1941–1945, will be used as the basis for study. For 1945–46 particular attention will be given to safeguarding information in contacts outside the agency: (1) in using a central index, (2) in procedures for making outside contacts, and (3) in disclosing information for research and teaching purposes.

Three subcommittees have been established to carry out this assignment.

Members of the former Committee on Records formed the nucleus of a membership for the new committee. These, plus others who joined the group because of an open invitation to all chapter members or due to personal recruitment by the chairman of the committee resulted in a committee membership of 20 persons.

The Committee on Records participated in the initiation of the work of the new committee. It met in a planning meeting with the chairman and three subcommittee chairmen, and later with all the members of the new committee when the work of the group was tentatively outlined.

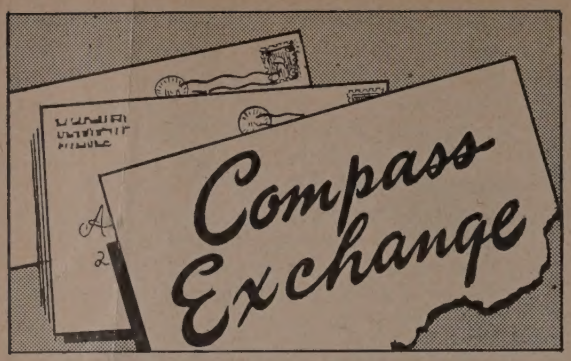
The Committee on Confidentiality plans to seek additional information about current practices in safeguarding information in contacts outside the agency and the philosophy underlying practice. It is desired to test the applicability in various types of administrative settings, of the principle "Other agencies and individuals should be consulted only with the client's consent and within the limits of that consent."

INVITATION TO OTHER CHAPTERS

The work of the District of Columbia Chapter has shown that the obligation to confidentiality in social work is not carried out in the same way or to the same degree within or among agencies. This lack of uniformity in an important aspect of professional ethics reflects in some instances uncritical adherence to long accepted practices, in others it indicates a variation in individual convictions or administrative decisions. The District of Columbia Chapter believes that social workers must clarify and work toward profession-wide adherence to principles that safeguard clients' rights to confidentiality. It hopes that additional chapters will undertake work in this area and that such work will supplement what has already been done by the District of Columbia and other chapters and that the work of all can be coordinated and integrated.

COMMITTEE ON RECORDS
District of Columbia Chapter
1941–45

[4] Vol. XXIX, No. 4 (April 1945), pp. 88–92.



Comments on Military Experience

To the Editor:

In the November 1945 issue of The Compass, the Wartime Committee on Personnel evaluates "assignment to duties in the combatant unit . . . limited to the purpose of combat . . . as not drawing upon social work experience or qualifications." I would like to submit the following considerations in modification of this judgment.

(1) The fact of living in itself is experience against which a social worker may draw.

(2) The forced living out of the social work milieu, without the protection of agency or professional status, is a complete sharing of life with people who do not have the same orientation. The "social work experience" is drawn upon to understand the implications of the common living, and there emerges a new realization of the social worker's place in the community.

(3) If the military experience includes that of responsibility on any level, the social worker's skill is utilized in understanding the men for whose lives he is responsible. Navy tradition has it that a "happy ship is an efficient ship." Such well-being of any unit is achieved by understanding the individual and applying that understanding in helping him be of most value to the group. In brief, it is a specific application of a generic skill.

(4) If the military experience includes administrative responsibility, it is likewise the application of a generic skill: that of administration. The essentials—research, planning, organization, personnel, budgeting, interpretation, coordination, and delegation of responsibility—are held in common. They may be readily carried over to a social work setting.

Stanley J. Brody
New York City

To the Editor:

I am in receipt of your reprint from The Compass on the "Guide for Evaluation of Military Experience as Qualifying for Civilian Employment in Social Work."

May I offer a few observations upon this Guide in view of my experience with certain aspects of the Army which have not been considered by the committee. I hope these observations may be accepted in a helpful and noncritical spirit. I merely wish to aid those officers and enlisted men who have had valuable experience which should be considered when they apply for civilian employment, but which is not considered in the above mentioned report.

The following types of experience should definitely be given major consideration, in many cases this experience being more valuable than assignments designated as "psychiatric social work":

(1) *Work with Displaced Persons*

Several thousand officers and enlisted men have been involved in programs of care and repatriation of United Nations Displaced Persons. Approximately six and a half million United Nations D.P.'s have been cared for by the Army. The programs have involved all aspects of health, welfare, child welfare, housing, feeding, tracing of missing persons and all of the other problems connected with any program involving complete care and responsibility for such a large mass of people. I would consider some of the experience in this field as being superior from the standpoint of qualifying for certain types of civilian jobs to anything that has yet been offered in social work in the United States.

(2) *Control of German Welfare Agencies*

A number of military personnel are involved in the reorganization and control of the German public and private welfare services. This experience is comparable to that involved in the running of public welfare services in the United States.

(3) *Special Services*

Many officers and enlisted men are involved in group work and leisure time programs with the Special Services Branch of the Army. Such activities would correspond to social work jobs in community centers, settlement houses and boys' clubs.

(4) *Miscellaneous*

Some consideration must also be given to the widespread experience of military personnel in the setting up of camps—which experience would be valuable for such things as War Relocation Authority activities, a running of such centers and convalescent homes for military personnel, and so forth.

Because of the hectic activities in which we are now engaged, there is no time to go into these matters in detail or to develop a well rounded presentation of the points I have indicated above.

If you will accept these remarks as indicative, but not complete, they may be helpful to additional consideration of this problem.

Lt. Col. Charles I. Schottland, UNRRA

School of Social Work in Holland

DEAR SIRS:

In the interest of the newly founded School of Social Work, we take the liberty to contact you. This is the first school of this type here in Holland and as we know you have already experience with education for these purposes, we hope you will be so kind to share this experience with us. We should be glad in particular if we could get information about your program and the books your pupils have to study. Further details about special suited books, either for our pupils or for the teachers, will be heartily welcome, as up to now no information about American and British scientific progress has reached us for about five dark years.

Although it will be extremely difficult to rebuild in this robbed country a system of education that equals your and our prewar level, such information is the first step and we thank you in anticipation for your readiness to supply us with it.

L. M. H. STERNFELD
Opleidingsschool voor Maatschappelijke Bedrijfsarbeid
Eindhoven, September 5, 1945

DEAR MR. ANDERSON:

First of all I have to thank you most kindly for the way in which you answered my demand for information of September 5th. You sent me splendid material: reprints from THE COMPASS and a number of newsletters, all together supplying us with a lot of detailed knowledge about training and working, difficulties and the way of meeting them, in your country. Moreover you are going to send us THE COMPASS monthly, so that we will be able to follow development in the coming year very closely. I shall see that it will come in hands of both teachers and pupils of our institute, so that it may distribute its experience as wide as possible.

Perhaps I shall later on give you some information about differences on the field of social work and the training for it in U.S.A. and here in Holland, as far as I can distinguish them merely by reading your and other publications. One essential difference I perceived already: In your country the specialized training for social work seems to be shorter (2 years, instead of 3⅓ with us), but has a longer general preparation (some years of University training, as far as Bachelor I suppose). Here in Holland it is, up to now, a custom that the pupils, after passing the final examination of the five years Secondary School in the age of about 18, have one or two years experience in practice (office, shop, hospital, etc.), and then are matriculated in a School of Social Work. It is quite possible we had better to change our method, but to be sure the results of the two ways of training would have to be compared in some way or other. Perhaps each of the methods is best suited for the circumstances under which the work has to be done.

L. M. H. STERNFELD
Eindhoven, November 15, 1945

Italian Social Workers Association

DEAR MR. ANDERSON:

On October 12, 1945 there was organized in Rome the Italian Social Workers Association. The creation of this association gives evidence of a constructive effort which eventually will give a new meaning to social service work in this country.

The I.S.W.A. is the result of some twenty-eight months of "missionary" work performed in various regions of Italy, covering Sicily to Rome. All this work was possible because of the fact that my duties as a military personnel and later as director of Section of Assistance to Stateless Refugees of Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, brought me in contact with the best minds interested in the social service field.

The purpose and organization of I.S.W.A. was planned along the lines of American Social Workers Association since it was felt that to do so would mean a very good beginning. Its program of activities for the present is not an overly ambitious one and centers its direction in giving solidarity to the movement.

FRANCIS A. CAPUTO, *Consultant*
Italian Social Workers Association
Rome, November 20, 1945

DEAR MR. ANDERSON:

To the end of the war I was stationed at Stanford University studying Japanese and Military Government. Was suddenly taken out and sent to Japan. Stayed at Yokohama for a while, then was transferred to Wakayama on the Inland Sea near Osaka. (Had originally been "earmarked" for the Osaka area. Most of my area studies were concerning Osaka.) After much delay and consideration by the powers-that-be, they decided that very little U. S. Military Government would be needed in Japan, so we were re-shipped to Korea.

At present I'm the Welfare Officer of Chyolla Pukto Province (North Chyolla) in southeast Korea. My prime responsibility is to have the Koreans reorganize (practically rebuild) a new provincial Welfare Department and a new provincial Health Department according to American standards. When that is done the next step will be to see that the Koreans organize Departments of Welfare and of Health in the counties and large cities to function under the provincial departments. Under the Japanese, welfare and health facilities were operated by the police to insure that rigid control of the people would be maintained at all times. At present the provincial departments are ready to function.

My biggest responsibility at the moment is to see that refugees passing through the port of Kunsan are properly cared for. Every other day three Navy LST's bring 3,000 Koreans back from Japan. These persons were used as "slave labor" by the Japanese. One million and a quarter, we are told, will eventually come through Kunsan and the same number through Mokpo, a port south of here. Have an officer, ten enlisted men and about 125 Koreans assigned to carry out the necessary processing. We have to screen the people coming ashore for contagious diseases, see that Korean doctors innoculate them, see that they are fed, given blankets and are orderly housed by shipload in various wharf warehouses. Later they have their Japanese money exchanged for Korean money; railroad tickets are sold to them. Finally we load them into small box cars (seventy-five or more to the car). Railroad facilities are so limited it is necessary to crowd the cars. Otherwise it will take additional months, perhaps even years, to get everyone home. Their average stay here is twenty-four hours. If any case of disease, for example, typhus or plague, is detected, the entire shipload will be kept in a separate warehouse for at least two weeks. So far we haven't had any bad luck like that and I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

We had the problem of feeding the people. Helped the local Koreans to organize a Korean Relief Society along the lines of the local Japanese Relief Society. They provide cooks, laborers, etc. We were allotted half of a 15,000,000 yen fund ($1,000,000 in American money) for rice. So we have plenty of rice. The Koreans in the province raised a fund to buy seasoning for the rice (something like shrimp flakes) and for coal. We requisitioned a former Jap candy factory to cook the food. We can cook enough rice for 3,000 people (one meal) in 45 minutes!

We have a problem of making ourselves understood. I studied Japanese for six months and am able to get fairly simple ideas and orders across. However, the Korean's don't like the Japanese language. When I can get a capable enough Korean who can speak a little English I use him. Generally they are difficult to find and usually someone else like a higher-ranking officer takes him away.

We also have Japanese refugees returning to Japan but these are only a relative few of the total present. The Japanese take care of most of their own problems—very few Japanese are left and all we have to do is to protect the remaining small minority from some of the more radical Koreans and urge these Japanese to get ready to leave here as soon as we can arrange transportation for them.

Last week we had additional troubles. A former Jap ammunition dump here blew up. Three officers, several enlisted men and about 50 Koreans were killed. About a thousand persons are homeless. Our Korean Relief Society is doing a pretty good job of trying to meet most of the worst needs.

About 250 are being housed temporarily in the local Buddhist Temple which is the Oriental way of meeting such a problem. The others are staying with relatives and friends. We are making arrangements for them to move into Japanese homes as these become vacant.

Our main concern is that Koreans do most of the work. We couldn't do it, even if we wanted to, because we lack the personnel. The Japanese held most of the Koreans down. They did not give them the chance to develop their abilities. This is undoubtedly the greatest problem faced.

One of the little sidelights that has come up concerns locating and reuniting families who become separated in all the confusion incident to loading in Japan and unloading here. We don't have many of these incidents but our Korean Relief Society has one "expert" now assigned to this duty. I "briefed" him for a little while on this duty and every time he does any good, he reports it to me, beaming all the while with self-satisfaction.

We recently set up a temporary means of collecting orphans and doing child placing. The Relief Society is also taking care of this until the City Welfare Department is organized. We had a score or more of children roaming the town and sleeping in the market place at night. The placed children will be taken away from these families if they are not properly cared for in accordance with Korean standards. decided by Korean investigators of the Relief Society.

As you can imagine my work has kept me busy. Certainly my social work training and experience has aided me greatly. Most of the Military Government officers shy away from the assignment as Welfare Officer. They look upon it as an impossible job. I think this attitude is the result of a complete lack of understanding of even first and basic social work principles.

LT. (j.g.) THOMAS D. WEILER, USNR

PRINCIPLES OF CONFIDENTIALITY IN SOCIAL WORK

The above report of the Washington, D. C., Chapter of the AASW referred to in the article in the CHAPTER BY CHAPTER section of this issue may be ordered from Mrs. Nellie Bain, Administrative Secretary of the Washington Chapter, 2806–31st Street, S.E., Apt. B-689, Washington 20, D. C., price 25¢. The report may also be secured from the national office.